THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

EMIL BRUNNER has given us a new book which no preacher should miss—*Faith, Hope, and Love.*[1] It is a small book which may be read—for a first reading—in an hour. Observe we say 'for a first reading.' One will not be satisfied with that. One will want to re-read and ponder, for, while there is complete lucidity in the presentation, the substance is profound, being the fruit of many years' study.

The work consists of a short course of three lectures delivered in Berkeley, California, in 1955. We are not surprised that there were numerous requests for the lectures to be published.

Many sermons have been preached on faith, perhaps fewer on hope, a multitude on love; but BRUNNER is right in holding that the three topics have never received what they deserve and require—theological treatment together. The three are inseparable and yet distinguishable, and to consider them together, how they originate, how they are related, may cast light on some problems. In the Middle Ages moral theologians added them to the four traditional virtues of Greek philosophy to produce the 'seven cardinal virtues.' Non-Roman thinkers have long seen the error of that, for example love is not something added to fortitude, it profoundly modifies it. BRUNNER says roundly that faith, hope, and love are not rightly termed virtues at all. No generic name can be found for them. They all hang together but each is unique. According to BRUNNER they may be distinguished in this way—faith refers to the past, hope to the future, love to the present.

On what in the past does Christian faith build? Centrically on the Cross of Christ. There is much about the life, sayings and works of Jesus reported in the Gospels as to which the scientific historian may be uncertain. One fact is historically indubitable—Jesus was 'crucified under Pontius Pilate.' Christianity is unique among religions in having an assured historical fact to which to look back as its foundation. John emphasises that, saying that what he and other apostles preach is what we have seen and heard and tasted and handled of the word of life. Christian faith begins with standing by the Cross and realizing that there is a revelation of God's justice and God's love. And further, the Christian identifies himself with Christ, realizing that it is his own sin that is being dealt with and that the offer of love is to him personally. If in faith he is fully persuaded of that, he will not be disturbed by whatever historical criticism or demythologizing of the gospel story may conclude. His whole life will be changed if by faith he can see Christ crucified for him; he may even come to say like St. Paul 'I am crucified with Christ.' The crucifixion of Jesus was a unique event in history which can never be repeated, yet in its meaning it has nothing to do with time, it is ever new.

In dealing with hope, BRUNNER makes a shattering attack on the idea of progress, *i.e.* the progress of humanity. Over the centuries, especially in our own times, stupendous advances have been made in knowledge and human control of natural forces. But has man himself really progressed? BRUNNER shows that the idea of progress is comparatively recent. It became influential in the eighteenth century and was mightily reinforced from then down to the two World Wars. In the nineteenth century evolution was supposed to make human progress inevitable. Science was believed by many to have made religion a quaint and rapidly disappearing survival. Morality did not need the outworn crutch of religion. Some few protested, but they were mostly regarded as voices crying in the wilderness. It was confidently hoped that man through education and better environment would go on perfecting himself and there was no need to think of God at all. Then came the debacle of the World Wars, when barbarism had such a resurgence. Pathetically men cannot believe in progress any more. The word is seldom heard; it is inscribed on no banner. The Christian has only too overwhelming evidence before him that morality without religion

[1] Lutterworth Press; 7s. 6d. net.

does not long survive. Christian hope is not in man's progress but in God and what things God is preparing for them who love Him. BRUNNER is astonished to find so many Christians professing to have little interest in the life to come. 'Without that hope faith is an illusion. Christ is either the guarantee of eternal life or He is nothing at all, and the Christian faith is a tragi-comical misunderstanding.' Faith in Christ and hope in Christ are inseparable. We cannot prove the life to come but we can be sure of the consequences of abandoning the hope. If death is the end, then the end is nothingness and life becomes meaningless. If life ends in nothing, then it is nothing. The Utopian dreams of earth becoming paradise. We see what sort of an earthly paradise godless communism has established—something far more like hell.

For many the trouble about the present is that with remorse for the past and anxiety about the future they have not much of a present at all. Faith removes the burden of the past, hope that of the future, and man is left with a real present to which he may give his attention and energy. In his present the Christian will be active and in all his activity he will be motivated by Christian love. This Christian love is not *eros* but *agape*. *Eros* is essentially self-centred, a kind of love which aims at being served and getting. *Agape* aims at serving and giving. Emotion is not its hallmark, it is good-will visibly manifested. In one sense of love—and that with its own beauty and value—it is a sheer impossibility to love everybody, for the essence of that love is to be selective and strictly limited. *Agape* is not limited; kindness, sympathy, good-will, service can be shown to all as circumstances permit. If faith does not issue in *agape*, St. Paul tells us, it is nothing.

Both faith and hope have their real content in the love of God revealed in Christ. Both are about God and His love. They are nothing therefore in themselves, but only in their relation to God's love. That is why St. Paul says love is the greatest of the three—not the most important, they are equally important, but love is the real substance of the other two. We cannot say God is faith or God is hope, but we can say God is love. Only if God's love be in our hearts can we truly love or attain that real peace and joy which every human being craves.

No Christian thinker has a better right to be heard on the problem of restoring communication than Dr. HENDRIK KRAEMER, for nearly ten years Director of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches at Bossey. Some lectures which he delivered at Toronto early last year have now been published—*The Communication of the Christian Faith*,[1] and we believe they will be eagerly searched for the insights which all sorts of churchmen will readily confess they lack in this matter.

Behind the contemporary discussions on the breakdown of communication there lies a fresh apostolic zeal, growing out of a new vision of the Church and out of the shock caused by the discovery of how little Christian even the nominally Christian parts of the world really are to-day. Alas, while this zeal and this shock are to be found in individuals and groups everywhere, most of the churches as such are but little concerned. The churches live now in a secularized and disintegrated mass society which is unusually dynamic; but in many respects they behave as if they still lived in the old stable and parochial world. This does not mean that they have not tried to adapt themselves to a new situation: in many cases they have, but generally it has been blindly and in self-defence under the pressure of the changing world, while retaining their style and atmosphere essentially unchanged. Are they acting, asks Dr. KRAEMER, for the sake of tactics or for the sake of faith?

The new situation, that the Church in many of the fields of its historic triumphs is more and more a minority, may be a blessing in disguise, if it teaches the Church that by its very nature it must not become identified with any social structure. If the Church grasps this situation in the realism of faith, with a robust trust in the power of the Holy Spirit, it will discover that continuity and prestige are merely crutches, and it will be glad to step out in faith with the power inherent in its nature and calling. Dr. KRAEMER is convinced that in that situation new powers undreamed of and new ways of communication, transcending all that can be discovered by a cultural and social analysis of the modern world, will be released. In every respect—in regard to itself, to the ecumenical movement and to the world—the Church is called to go forth in faith, like Abraham of old, to an unknown destination hid as yet in the counsels of the Almighty. Living by tactics means remaining well established, though making intelligent adaptations and undertaking incursions into the world; but that is a very different thing from setting forth in faith,

[1] Lutterworth Press; 11s. 6d. net.

unprotected, consciously and joyfully to goals not yet revealed.

From this fundamental position Dr. KRAEMER deals with answers to the breakdown of communication under two headings—the direct and the indirect. As regards the latter, he affirms that the problem of communication is not to be solved by evangelistic activity or by building up a theology of evangelism, though both are very necessary. These will certainly yield results, but they will remain adventurous exploits unless the Church itself is radically changed under the constraint to conform itself to its true nature. What is that nature? Is it not to be, in all humility and imperfection, the fore-shadowing of the true community of men, the body that has been sent to serve all for Christ's sake and so to proclaim, by fellowship and service, God's love for men? However valuable the work of the Church may be, it does not often strike the world, or even its own members, as being a true community of disinterested service. In manifold ways it is conformed to the world and so hides its true nature that it can be regarded empirically in the modern world as one of many religious societies with a venerable but dubious past. Therefore the start of overcoming the breakdown of communication is a sincere self-criticism and self-purge by the Church of its cultural lags and of its subservience to the dominant thought-forms of the present age, in the light of its Divine nature and calling. Without this—and it is an endless task—efforts in the field of evangelism will remain inhibited.

As regards the direct approach, that is to say methods of evangelism, Dr. KRAEMER repeatedly stresses the point that there must be many methods and levels of communication for there are many types of mentality and kinds of people. Nineteenth-century methods, brought up-to-date in some respects, are still in use, as in the Billy Graham campaigns. At the other extreme are experiments in identification of life, accompanied by a waiting for the opportunity of verbal witness, of which the most spectacular example has been that of the worker-priests. Between these extremes lie many varieties of method designed to meet specific groups at their own level.

This leads Dr. KRAEMER to refer to the matter of language. When the Church speaks it must speak theology, because it has to convey a message which revolves round God, man and life. It cannot say what it likes: it must say what God by His revelation in Christ has commanded it to say. It is not, however, obliged to do this in language accessible only to a select few. The audience also has its rights. The message has not only to be spoken but also heard; and there is a danger, which Dr. KRAEMER recognizes as not having been avoided at Evanston, that in ecumenical declarations we should be more taken up with framing a statement that will satisfy as many as possible of the people inside than with giving full play to the apostolic urge to produce language that can be widely apprehended by them that are without. To be able to translate or transpose the language of Canaan into the language of the world requires flexibility and directness, and even more fundamentally it requires a thorough grasp of the Christian message, not primarily by intellect but by commitment. Further, in our present secularized world, language is so largely divested of conscious notions of the Christian faith that a far wider connotation is needed than the verbal one which is usually attached to the term language. In the problem of communication as it poses itself to-day language and translation include everything that presents in some manner the resolute commitment and solidarity of the Church with all the conditions, needs, and joys of men, wherever they may be, since the Lordship of Christ claims everything and everybody. Hence in many cases verbal silence combined with acts of disinterested identification and service may be appropriate methods of communication in the contemporary situation. Such a strategy reinforces the further point that immense possibilities for overcoming the breakdown of communication are beginning to appear in the various lay movements in many countries and churches.

Finally we must note that Dr. KRAEMER holds that we cannot exchange the treasure of cardinal Biblical concepts and expressions for new terms adapted to the thought forms of the modern world, though that may seem contradictory to his previous stress on transposition and flexibility. Translation is indeed necessary here, for Biblical as well as theological language does not escape the relativity belonging to all human speech. The elementary Biblical words such as sin and redemption are not to be hurled indiscriminately at the heads of uninterested Christians and unbelievers. Yet these words can be shown to be symbols of fundamental life situations which concern every man in every age. In that sense the Bible is always relevant. 'The Bible in its essential content proves itself, if one takes the trouble to take it fully seriously. It needs no dogma of inspiration to justify the claim for its authority, and to demonstrate its transcendency above all theological systems and formulations.'

Expository Problems

Predestination—Romans ix.–xi.

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I

Hic liber est in quo quaerit sua dogmata quisque
Invenit et pariter dogmata quisque sua.

No part of the Scriptures has provided more adequate vindication of this cynical epigram than Ro 9–11. Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin have found in this passage one of the main supports of their doctrine of double predestination; Origen, Chrysostom, and Arminius have used it to confirm their belief that man's destiny rests on his own free response to God's grace; and the universalists have seized on it as one of the few Biblical texts which give grounds for belief in universal salvation. The irony is that all have been sound in their affirmations, though grievously at fault in their failure to appreciate the strength of the other two positions. For Paul actually contrives, as we shall see, to hold all three beliefs at the same time.

At the root of all the controversies which these chapters have engendered lies the mistaken notion that in the Scriptures Divine truth is imparted in the form of proposition or dogma. Paul never appears to us as a systematic theologian writing a *Summa Theologica*, but always as an evangelist of profound insight dealing with the practical problems of his own day. In Ro 9–11 he is not writing a treatise on predestination and free will nor yet a philosophy of history: he is wrestling with one of the most perplexing questions raised by his work as a preacher of the gospel. The Jesus whom Paul has preached to the Gentiles as Saviour and Lord was also Messiah, in whom were fulfilled all the ancient promises of God to His people Israel, and in whom the Gentiles were invited to become fellow-citizens with the saints. This gospel was open to an apparently devastating criticism: if Jesus is Messiah, why have His own people not received Him, and why has God's chosen nation no part in the fulfilment of the promises God made to it?

Paul could not even approach this problem without a sense of profound personal involvement. In spite of his conversion from Judaism to Christianity he remained a Jew by inheritance and pride of race, and he had the Jewish feeling for corporate solidarity. Indeed, throughout his treatment of the problem he is thinking far more of national destiny than of the ultimate fate of individuals. But Paul also felt involved in the rejection of the Jewish nation because he had had a part in bringing it about. There had been a time when the Christian Church was a mission to the Jews, and it was largely through Paul's endeavours that it had now become a predominantly Gentile movement. It was almost entirely through Paul's insistence that Christ was the end of the Law and that Jew and Gentile must enter the Church on equal terms that the Jewish mission of James and the Jerusalem Church had been doomed to futility. When Paul spoke of the rejection of the Jews by God, he was not theorizing: for he was uncomfortably aware that he was the instrument through which their severance from Christ had been made complete, and he would willingly have exchanged places with his brethren according to the flesh if his rejection could have secured their acceptance.

Paul's contemporary and national problem has, of course, its modern and individual counterpart. He asked, Why are the Gentiles coming into the Church but not the Jews? I may ask, Why am I a member of the Church but not my neighbour? There are three possible answers to this question: that I am a Christian because God in His mercy has drawn me to Himself; that my neighbour has received the same offer but has failed to make the response of faith; and that my present acceptance and his present rejection are neither of them final, but are stages in a stupendous plan of God to bring both of us, and all others like us, into His eternal kingdom. To the logical Western mind these three answers might seem to be mutually incompatible, but Paul, without any apparent sense of self-contradiction or incongruity, puts all three answers side by side. Salvation is not a matter of human will or exertion but of Divine mercy (9^{18}), the Jews are themselves to blame because they have not all obeyed the gospel (10^{16}); yet their disobedience and rejection are not final, but are part of God's mysterious purpose of universal salvation—'God has shut up all men into disobedience that He may have mercy upon all' (11^{32}).

What are we to make of this paradox, which puts into triple harness Divine election, human responsibility and universal salvation? The final outburst of praise in 11^{33-36} indicates that it is not due to confusion of thought, but is a courageous

facing of the limitations of human thought. The finite and temporal mind of man is so inadequate to fathom the infinite and eternal nature and purposes of God that all three solutions are necessary to do justice to the breadth and profundity of God's plan of salvation. When we are dealing with ultimate matters the only alternative to paradox is the presumption that dares to exalt human logic to the throne which belongs to the Divine mercy. It was this worship of consistency which led both Calvin and Arminius astray: for the one made God's predestination alone responsible for the creation of faith, so that the Jews were blamed for rejecting an opportunity that was never really offered; and the other reduced God's predestining grace to a determination on the part of God to elect those who of their own initiative responded to the gospel with faith; and both explained away the universalism of Paul's conclusion.

II

According to Paul's gospel God has fulfilled His promise of grace to Israel in such a way that a great part of Israel has been excluded from the covenant. Does this mean that God has broken His promise? Paul's answer is that even to ask such a question is to make the erroneous assumption that man may come before God with a claim on His mercy. A man has a right to what he earns, not to what he receives as a free gift; and mercy and grace are free gifts of God. If they depended on anything other than God's sovereign will, they would not be mercy and grace.

The Jew believed that because God had been gracious to Abraham the descendants of Abraham were entitled to similar treatment. But Paul is able to show from Scripture that the promise which God gave to Abraham was given not to his physical descendants (whose physical descent might have constituted a claim upon God) but to his spiritual descendants who were prepared with Abraham's faith to put their whole trust in the promises of God. For Abraham had two children, Ishmael and Isaac, and the promise descended through Isaac and not through Ishmael. It might, of course, be objected that the son of the free woman had an advantage over the son of the slave which provided him with a basis for his election and a claim upon God's favour. But this argument could not be used in the case of Isaac's sons, for Jacob and Esau were twins. Yet 'before they were born or had done anything either good or bad . . . their mother was told, The elder shall be servant to the younger' ($9^{11f.}$). Here at the outset of Israel's history was a clear revelation of the sovereignty of Divine grace which has no cause beyond itself. The implication is that God is exercising the same sovereign grace in bringing some Jews into the Christian Church and leaving others outside.

Paul is not asking us to believe that God's actions are arbitrary, capricious or unreliable. His concept of faith is trust in a God who has shown Himself worthy to be trusted, and he is about to declare that 'God never goes back on His gifts or calling' (11^{29}). He would not have his readers anxious or apprehensive about their ultimate destiny, as though it rested on something unpredictable, for he has just affirmed his own conviction that nothing can separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus. The point he is making, and the only point he is concerned to make in this chapter, is that God's grace must be received as grace or it cannot be received at all. He who comes to God demanding his deserts must not be disappointed if that is all he gets. Even when he has moved on to a later stage of his argument, he reverts to this initial theme to warn his Gentile converts that, if they begin to despise the Jews for their unbelief and to boast of their own faith, they will be taking God's goodness for granted and falling away from grace (11^{21}). Not even faith constitutes a claim on God's mercy; for faith is the recognition that there can be no such claim, that I can come to God only because He has called me. Paul goes on to express the hope that the Jews will not continue in their unbelief; but the opposite of this is not to continue in faith but to continue in God's goodness. For the security of the Christian rests not in his faith but in God.

Paul is aware that the radiance of predestining grace casts a shadow of rejection. Isaac is taken and Ishmael is left. Jacob is loved and Esau is hated. He whom God does not choose is abandoned to his own ways (1^{24}) and so confirmed in his sin. But the example of Pharaoh helps us to see a little way into the mystery of the Divine purpose which lies behind both election and rejection. Moses' faith and Pharaoh's hardness of heart together served to further God's plan of salvation by displaying His power and publishing abroad His name. Both therefore must in some sense be regarded as God's doing. 'So then He has mercy on whom He wills and whom He wills He hardens' (9^{18}). The story of the Exodus has been re-enacted in Christian history, with the unbelieving Jews playing the part of Pharaoh. For God's long patience with Israel through the centuries of her disobedience has had the same double purpose. He had designed to display His wrath and make known His power in a comprehensive act of retribution—seven years earlier Paul had already observed that by rejecting the

gospel and choosing the path of nationalism in the teeth of Roman imperial power the Jewish people had become ripe for destruction (' The wrath has come upon them to the uttermost '—1 Th 2^{16}). But this purpose of wrath was subsidiary to His main purpose of mercy whereby, out of the ruins of the old Israel, He had brought into being a new people of God, drawn from both Jews and Gentiles, upon whom He could make known the riches of His glory.

In raising up one for wrath and another for glory God is like the potter who makes one vessel for honourable, another for menial, use. Paul has been taken to task for his use of this ' well-worn metaphor ' on the grounds that men are not pots, nor yet puppets manipulated by a showman, but living agents to whom God has given the gift of free choice. But this is to miss the point of the illustration. The potter makes vessels for use. He does not make one pot to keep and another to throw away. A vessel may in the end have to be discarded, but the potter does not make vessels for the ghoulish delight of hurling them against a wall. There is here, in fact, not a shadow of justification for the blasphemous doctrine that God creates some men solely to be destroyed for His greater glory. Indeed, Paul is not here at all concerned with the eternal destiny of individuals, and his doctrine of predestination is intended to humble our pride rather than to satisfy our curiosity on matters which God has kept within His own counsel. He is concerned with the use which God makes of men and nations in the working out of His historic purpose. Election and rejection, wrath and mercy, are alike prompted by the one Divine purpose of salvation, which faith cannot hurry nor unbelief delay. *Man's freedom, exercised in obedience or in rebellion, is no limitation on God's omnipotence.*

III

Having established his first point, Paul now turns to deal with the same problem from the side of human freedom. Man's part in salvation is faith, ' being fully assured that God is able to perform what He has promised ' (4^{20}), being ready to receive at the hand of God the unmerited gift of His love. The opposite of faith is sin, the refusal to acknowledge dependence on God (1^{21}). Grace and faith are obverse and reverse of the one coin, the two sides of the Divine-human encounter which is salvation. Humanly speaking, the Jews have missed this encounter because they tried to win by their own achievement that which can be had only as a free gift. They were so blind to the character of grace that they tried to earn it. Being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness ' (10^{3}). To try to establish a credit balance with God is to miss the Divine munificence which freely wipes out all our deficits. This is why law is the great enemy of the gospel, for law (or, more accurately, legalism) encourages a man to believe that the burden of responsibility for his salvation rests on his own shoulders, and that by his performance he can deserve God's grace. If the gospel is to have free course, law must be superseded. ' Christ is the end of law, that everyone who has faith may be justified ' (10^{4}).

The Jews, then, had no reason for complaint if they found themselves outside the redeemed community. They were outside by their own choice. God had made to them His offer of salvation and they had responded with unbelief. In the light of what has gone before we must say that their exclusion was due to God's sovereign and predestining will. What we must not say is that God predestined them to unbelief. Their unbelief was their own undoing, for which they alone bore the responsibility. God's choice and their choice coincided to bring about the one result.

In the affairs of men every event has two causes, the will of God and the will of men, just as in a drama or novel every event is produced in one sense by the characters and in another sense by the author. Miss Dorothy Sayers in *The Mind of the Maker* has made a most illuminating comparison between the relation of the Creator to His creatures and the relation of the human creator to the creatures of his pen. For the author must first construct a plot and then create characters to put it into operation. But a character, once created, becomes almost an independent person with a mind and will of his own. He cannot be coerced into doing or saying anything foreign to his nature, and if the author tries to make him do or say anything ' out of character ' he is abusing his omnipotence and destroying the integrity of his creature. On the other hand the characters may get out of hand and take control of the plot, so that the result is different from what the author intended. The author must be able to bring his plot to a successful conclusion without doing violence to the characters in his story. In other words, he must find a practical solution to the problem of predestination and free will.

God's omnipotence consists in His ability to work out His eternal purpose without violence to the freedom of the men and women He has created. Omnipotence and freedom appear to be opposites only when we think of omnipotence in terms of coercion, forgetting that God is love. *Divine omnipotence, exercised in election or in rejection, is never a denial of human freedom.*

IV

Paul has accounted for the present state of affairs. The Jews have been excluded from the new Israel both by God's choice and by their own. He now returns to the original question, Has God rejected His people ? and adds three new observations which modify considerably the result he has so far attained. Firstly, not all Israel has been rejected. Ever since the time of Elijah there has been a remnant of Israel faithful to the nation's calling and this rôle has been assumed by the Jewish Christians who represent the old Israel in the Church. Secondly, Paul knew better than others that the hardening of the Jews had been the means of bringing in the Gentiles. It was persecution by the Jews which had set on foot the first missionary movement of the Church, and in his own career it was the repeated rebuffs in the synagogue which had turned him in one city after another to the Gentiles. If the Jews had been more enthusiastic in their reception of the gospel, the Church would have become a solidly Jewish institution into which it might have been hard for a Gentile to gain entry. But any event which had turned out so decisively for the furtherance of the gospel must have been allowed for in God's plan of salvation. And if God had set the Jews aside in order to make room for the Gentiles, as Paul has already hinted, it follows that their rejection is not necessarily final. Thirdly, Paul himself had been one of those whom God had hardened. He had rejected Christ and persecuted His Church. But in his case the hardening had been part of the process whereby God had penetrated the fortress of his self-esteem, that he might be justified by faith. Thus through his own experience of Christ he had come to a vision of God's astounding purpose to humble Israel's pride through rejection and to bring her to faith through envy of the Gentiles who had supplanted her. Once the fulness of the Gentiles had been gathered in, then all Israel was to be saved. ' God has shut up all men into disobedience, that He may have mercy upon all ' (11^{32}).

This is not the first time that Paul has suggested that rejection could be a path leading to salvation. There was a notorious sinner at Corinth who was to be handed over to Satan ' that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus ' (1 Co 5^{5}). The whole Corinthian Church had been warned that if any man's work should be destroyed by the testing fire of judgment ' he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire ' (1 Co 5^{15}). But these statements have hardly prepared us for the staggering assertion that God's sovereign love is able whether through election or rejection, whether through faith or disobedience, to bring all men at the last to the kingdom of His mercy. Small wonder that Paul's argument ends in a hymn of praise to the inscrutable ways of God.

The doctrine of predestination forbids us to say that all men will in fact be saved, for this is to presume on God's grace, and to claim as a right that which can only be an ineffable mystery of love. The doctrine of free will reminds us that no man can be saved without his consent or without his free acceptance of God's offer of mercy. The one doctrine is vital to true religion, the other to sound morals. But neither doctrine must be allowed to set limits to the scope of God's love or to blur the vision of His ultimate victory.

Literature

MEISTER ECKHART

Mysticism seems ordinarily to make its appearance as a way of escape from the inadequacies of contemporary organized religion or established thought. Thus, by such authorities as W. R. Inge, James McKinnon and Claud Field, Meister Eckhart has been called a precursor of the Reformation, since priesthood and means of grace appear irrelevant to one for whom the idea of unmediated oneness with God meant so much, while for the same reason Bossuet (as Ronald Knox points out) in his attack on Madame Guyon's radical dissatisfaction with seventeenth-century formalism and laxity, is happy to connect the extravagancies of Quietism with the writings of one officially condemned by the Church several hundreds of years earlier. Many different evaluations have been made of the work of Meister Eckhart. Among the most curious was surely that of the notorious Alfred Rosenberg in the Germany of 1934, which proclaimed Eckhart the creator of a new religion, a German religion, free from all Judaic and Romish influences. One reason for widely different interpretations has been the extreme difficulty which Mysticism has in expressing itself in intelligible language. It was this that led John Wesley to describe one of Jacob Boehme's works as ' sublime nonsense.' In the case of Eckhart the blame is partly his own, for he is not only discussing the indescribable and putting into words the ineffable, but he has a

private passion for paradox. The extremes to which he carried this tendency made charges of heresy or near-heresy almost inevitable, though his statements were generally interesting examples of acute mental and spiritual insight. But some of the misunderstanding to which his works have given rise in modern times has been due simply to the fact that strictly accurate information has not hitherto been available. His general position and main characteristics are quite clear. His theological and philosophical ancestry is evident. But there has been obvious need for such a treatise as we now have in James M. Clark's *Meister Eckhart: An Introduction to the Study of his Works with an Anthology of his Sermons* (Nelson; 25s. net).

This volume, handsomely produced, and the work of one who has made a long and careful study of German Mysticism, and who is an expert in mediaeval German language as well as familiar with mediaeval thought, seeks in particular 'to clear away the accumulated mass of error and prejudice,' and offers as up-to-date an account as the present state of relevant scholarship permits. The first half of Dr. Clark's book is an authoritative account of the man, the theologian and philosopher, the mystic, the scholar and the poet. There follow translations by Dr. Clark of twenty-five selected sermons from the vernacular, with useful annotations, two documents from the Latin in connexion with the trial and condemnation, and a sufficient bibliography. There are several illustrations.

Dr. Clark provides an interesting and convincing picture of this remarkable Paris doctor, Dominican preacher and speculative mystic, who naturally remained largely a product of his own period, combining with no apparent effort the influences of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas with those of Neo-Platonism and Augustine, but who himself set the direction for later German Mysticism such as that of Tauler and Suso. His sermons are marred for us by that allegorical interpretation which had come down from Origen and Ambrose and whose absurd domination lingered till the dawn of modern Biblical criticism. They contain, however, utterances both simple and abstruse of the utmost spiritual value. Of special significance are phrases such as 'the spark of the soul' and sentences proclaiming almost beyond the power of words the intimacy of the union with God which is open to the soul. His expressions were often too greatly daring for his day; but for those whom patent exaggeration has power to awaken, and such as have even the elements of poetic appreciation, as well as for the truly spiritual, there is in these sermons rich reasure.

G. D. HENDERSON

HISTORY IN MARK

The Problem of History in Mark (S.C.M.; 8s. net), by Professor James M. Robinson of Emory University, U.S.A., discusses a question of fundamental importance. This short essay of ninety-five pages has the distinction of having been awarded a prize in the 1954–55 competition sponsored by the Christian Research Foundation and is a welcome addition to the Series, 'Studies in Biblical Theology,' in which it appears as No. 21. Professor Robinson has cast his net widely. In an introductory chapter he traces the study of Mark from the nineteenth century, during which it was regarded as 'immanent, objective history,' through the turn of the century when it was interpreted as 'non-historical theology' and by some writers as containing mythology, down to the present day, when many interpret it as containing 'theologically understood history.' The writers whom he regards as significant during this process of development are D. F. Strauss, W. Wrede, A. Schweitzer, W. Erbt, M. Werner, R. H. Lightfoot, J. Schniewind, K. L. Schmidt, M. Dibelius, H. J. Ebeling and R. Bultmann. Professor Robinson has been deeply influenced by Form Criticism and by the modern tendency to give an existentialist interpretation to the Gospel tradition, but he is convinced that Mark intended to write history. The 'history,' however, which the Evangelist records is 'kerygmatic history,' that is history as shaped by theological convictions which centre round the idea of a conflict of the Spirit with Satan manifest in the story of Jesus.

The author attaches great importance to the introductory section, Mk 1^{1-13}, and especially to the cosmic aspects of the Baptism and Temptation narratives and to the exorcisms described in the Gospel. As described by the Evangelist these narratives 'depict a cosmic struggle in history to inaugurate the eschatological reign of God,' and establish a bridge-head for the thesis that 'this historical narrative is itself envisaged in terms of that cosmic struggle.' Further, 'the debates,' he says, 'are a continuation of the cosmic struggle,' and the Markan eschatology continues within the Church the same kind of history which characterized Jesus' history—'a struggle between Spirit and Satan, until the final outcome of that struggle is reached and the goal of history attained.' Mark's norm of piety, Professor Robinson thinks, is not the numinous but 'faith,' although he is careful to tell us that the Evangelist had no single person or act as the object of faith, and no specific credal statement as to its content.

It cannot be said that the book is easy to read. What meaning, for example, are we to assign to the claim that Mark gives expression to 'a religious

attitude which recognizes the historicity of human existence,' or to the opinion that Form Criticism 'eliminated pre-Marcan literary sources and Gospels'? Lucidity appears to be the first victim of the more heady forms of present-day criticism. The sheer ability of the book, however, encourages us to believe that the author may not have said his last word about the problem of history in Mark.

VINCENT TAYLOR

PHILOSOPHY AT CAMBRIDGE

In a sense *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century: A Cambridge Symposium*, ed. by Professor C. A. Mace (Allen and Unwin; 30s. net), is a companion volume to 'Contemporary British Philosophy,' published recently as a third volume in a series under the 'Muirhead Library of Philosophy.' But companions do not always agree, and, whilst in the earlier volume Professor Paton apologized with alluring courtesy for his Oxford point of view, the editor of this later book has no hesitation in revealing that this is a Cambridge symposium, the place of origin being Cambridge and the majority of the writers Cambridge philosophers. It does not follow, however, that the lectures included here bear out the truth of the quotation in the earlier volume that 'the difference between an Oxford and a Cambridge man is greater than that between any two European nationalities.'

As is but fitting, the introductory lecture, by Professor C. D. Broad, one of the most famous of his group, is an historical survey of the outstanding Cambridge contributions to philosophy during the first half of this century. He gives us an interesting disquisition on the difference between the two centres of learning, and, despite his local loyalty, betrays a certain hankering after the fleshpots of Oxford, with its greater variety of contact, the plenitude of its staffing resources and its fuller attention to ancient classical philosophy. But he steadfastly maintains that, under unsatisfactory conditions, Cambridge has done its best—and a very good 'best' it is. A list which contains such names as Venn, Ward, the two Keynes, Sorley, Stout, Whitehead, McTaggart, Bertrand Russell, *and* Moore, can hardly be described as less than brilliant.

In the course of his individual, and all-too-brief, sketches Professor Broad is cautious and slightly caustic about Ward, but generally admits the width and depth of his influence, saying incisively that his Gifford Lectures 'administered the *coup de grâce* to Spencer's claims to be taken seriously as a philosopher.' In regard to McTaggart he is a little vague and rather condescending, but thinks that two of his books are 'a quite unique contribution to Western philosophy.' Of his colleague, Moore, he says, with obvious sincerity of appreciation, that 'he had a greater influence than any one other man on English philosophy . . . during the last fifty years.' Professor Moore's own contribution, on his favourite subject of 'Visual Sense-Data,' is the shortest in the book, but special attention is rightly drawn to it both in the Foreword and in the Preface. His importance is further stressed in Professor Ewing's discussion on Moore's contention that 'good' cannot be defined in terms of anything else. On the whole Professor Ewing seems to agree that this is the only position which effectively protects the autonomy of ethics over against naturalism and emotional subjectivity. Professor Mace's article is a triumph of condensation, indicating the historical emergence of Behaviourism but not assigning to it a very dignified position.

Professor Redpath's essay on 'Problems of Modern Aesthetics' fittingly concludes a volume which breaks new ground in many directions and helps greatly in indicating the growing points in present philosophical development. The late John Laird once said that, after taking a philosophy Honours course at Edinburgh under the placid guidance of Pringle-Pattison, he had, when he went to Cambridge 'to begin all over again.' Cambridge philosophers are still prevailingly fond of 'beginning over again,' but they certainly do not remain stationary at the point where they begin.

W. S. URQUHART

LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

We welcome still another book from the pen of the Rev. William Barclay, D.D.—*Letters to the Seven Churches* (S.C.M.; 8s. 6d. net). It is an exposition of chs. 2 and 3 of the Book of Revelation, in which the writer addresses a letter to each of seven churches in the neighbourhood of Ephesus. The Book of Revelation as a whole is something of a mystery to most modern readers, and these introductory letters are usually felt to be the least obscure of all the chapters in the book. Even here, however, there are many allusions which need interpretation.

Dr. Barclay gives two chapters to each letter. In the first he describes the city which is addressed, giving the historical and geographical information which has a bearing on the contents of the letter; and in the second he expounds the letter itself, showing how aptly relevant it was to the circumstances of its first recipients, and applying its message to the Church to-day.

All this is done with admirable clarity and most interestingly. It is just the kind of book to help anyone who wishes to lead a Bible study group on the subject of these letters. The great Bible words,

as they occur, are carefully explained. Apt quotations and illustrations appear on almost every page, and always illuminate the exposition and application of the message.

One wonders, however, why the introductory letter in ch. 1, addressed to all seven churches together, was not included in this exposition, and, since geographical features are dealt with so faithfully and significantly in the text, we should have valued a sketch map, in which the points mentioned were clearly indicated.

C. L. MITTON

FAITH AND LOGIC

Why do we nowadays ask so much from science, and have we a right to make such demands upon it? Is the truth of religion more akin to poetry than to science? What do statements about God mean to assert and how can they be verified? These are questions that the analytic philosophers are asking with a new seriousness, and in the volume *Metaphysical Beliefs* (S.C.M.; 25s. net) they are answered respectively by Stephen E. Toulmin of Leeds, Ronald W. Hepburn of Aberdeen, and Alasdair Macintyre of Manchester. The first brings out clearly that when we shudder at the prospect of the 'running down' of the universe or beg evolution to provide us with a sanction for the moral law, we are asking the scientist to do more than is within his province. His prestige to-day is such that we encourage him to take over the tasks of metaphysics and religion: we forget what Kant demonstrated, that science can be so certain only because its application is so restricted. For an ultimate guide and support we must look elsewhere. We hanker after a 'natural theology' just as did the contemporaries of Dr. Johnson, and we expect the scientist to give it us. But he cannot, though, being human, he often thinks he can.

The second contribution to the symposium is a masterpiece of sustained argument and close attention to detail; the evidence is followed just as far as it will take us, but not a step farther. We are shown how valuable the analogy between the language of poetry and that of religion can be, but that it has distinct limits. The imagery of the poet is charged with power and can carry conviction while we read; it can bring to us a new, more comprehensive and more satisfying vision of life; but faith in God claims to do more than that. The imagery of the Bible in the last resort asserts that something is the case as that of poetry does not. 'The Christian reconciliation comes about through response to "information" about the world, which may provide an admirable subject-matter for poetry but cannot be itself *established* poetically.'

The last contributor brings out the unique character of religious assertions. They cannot be demonstrated, so that the critic's demand for a procedure of verification cannot be met. They are offered as confession, and they are accepted because their content convinces, and the authority behind them commands acknowledgment. His conclusion is that 'to accept religious belief is a matter not of argument but of conversion.'

All this is doubtless true and important enough. But does it not need to be supplemented? The same question is suggested by Michael B. Foster's *Mystery and Philosophy* (S.C.M.; 12s. 6d. net), written from a standpoint very different from that of the logical analysts. His starting-point is Marcel's distinction between mystery and problem, and he rightly maintains that the Bible does not provide us with solutions of problems, it invites us to enter a realm of mystery. He is critical of the Greek tradition, with its 'thought-model' of man as sense below and reason above. He is disposed to base ethics upon revelation, though he admits that the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament seems to know of something very like 'natural law.' In common with the rest of these writers, he is at such pains to show that faith has a language and rights of its own that he is in danger of forgetting that the Christian must not only preserve his faith, he must also communicate it. What is needed is the recognition that, if religious conviction is to maintain itself in the long run, it must establish a *modus vivendi* with other forms of experience. Is it not sounder policy for Christianity to invite the fire of its critics than to serve notice upon them that it has retreated beyond their range?

E. L. ALLEN

THE FAITH OF A JEW

An admirable presentation of some aspects of the Jewish faith is offered by Rabbi L. Jacobs in *We Have Reason To Believe* (Vallentine, Mitchell; 15s. net). The author sets out to show that while religious faith cannot be established by reason, neither can it be overthrown by reason. Ultimately it rests on an experience, whose reality cannot be questioned by those who share it. He considers the problem of pain and the question of miracles, and argues that while reason cannot solve the former faith can transcend it, and that while it is not contrary to reason to recognize the possibility of miracle, the evidence for particular miracles needs to be examined. In all this there is nothing fundamentally new, but the discussion is all from a Jewish angle, and is illuminated by many Jewish as well as by non-Jewish quotations.

Other chapters of the book are addressed more directly to Jewish readers, and particularly those

in which the author discusses Biblical criticism. Here he has an enlightened attitude shared by many Christians, and argues that the scientific study of the Bible is not inconsistent with the recognition of its religious value, and that revelation through persons is still revelation, even though the mark of the imperfect persons through whom it is given are upon it. He writes of the Jewish study of the Torah, and both emphasizes its high value and pleads for its combination with the study of modern subjects, holding that the marriage of learning and faith is an enrichment of both. There is a chapter on the Afterlife, in which the neglect of this element of faith in modern times is deplored and the reasonableness of the hope of survival in fuller fellowship with God is defended, and also a chapter on the attitude of Judaism to other faiths. Throughout the author shows a cultured and enlightened mind, firm in its adherence to the orthodox Jewish faith, but not bound by tradition.

H. H. Rowley

THE MEANING OF SIN

Principal Frederic Greeves has long been troubled by the evidence, in common speech as in learned discourse, that the word *sin* is being used in ways that conceal from men the true nature of their sinfulness. With this problem, and its manifold implications, he grapples in *The Meaning of Sin* (Epworth Press; 21s. net). In so doing he has to meet many weighty antagonists—Bertrand Russell and the many who distinguish right action from wrong but will have nothing to do with the Christian doctrine of sin; the Christian psychologists who come near to equating sin and the unconscious; and, perhaps the strongest opponent of all to his own use of the word, his old and revered teacher Dr. F. R. Tennant, whose definition, 'Moral imperfection for which an agent is, in God's sight, accountable,' has gone largely unchallenged since the publication of 'The Concept of Sin' in 1912.

It is not Principal Greeves' purpose to give some new account of sin but, over against the inadequacies involved in the many current views, to expound the *Christian* doctrine. He devotes the earlier chapters to a critical examination of those views and establishes—in my opinion soundly—the conclusion that it is impossible to define sin either in terms of ignorance or in terms of knowledge. On the one hand the problem of ignorance rests on the fact that men lack knowledge of what sin is. It is this lack which the gospel makes good. On the other hand, seriously as we must take the ethical content of sin and salvation, it is not possible to arrive at the nature of sin by induction from the consideration of wrong actions. In the course of the discussion there are frequent references to the problem of guilt but again and again, somewhat disconcertingly, the author seems to fight shy of grappling with it. The reason for this becomes clear, as the total argument develops, in the fruitful suggestion that guilt should be explained in terms of sin and not *vice versa*.

For all the discussion of words and views the author is aware, and makes us aware, that this is no logomachy. The great concern is 'the desperate plight and promised release of Everyman.' The book is not without an element of discursiveness and prolixity; it is sometimes necessary to turn back to pick up the threads, but the over-all conclusion is that this is a profoundly religious study which sets sin in the light of the love of the holy God. 'The totality of our sinfulness,' Principal Greeves concludes, 'is met by the boundless generosity of God, and He has shown to us the meaning of our sin only in order that we need no longer be sinners.'

Marcus Ward

Popular books on Christian ethics are apt to be unsatisfactory because not built upon a clear Christian basis or, at all events, not revealing what that basis really is. An exception is *Christian Ethics*, by the Rev. Dr. Georgia Harkness, Professor of Applied Theology at the Pacific School of Religion (Abingdon Press; $3.75). The latter part of the book deals helpfully with specific contemporary problems; but for some readers the earlier part will be more valuable. It seeks to clear up ambiguities in the term Christian ethics, to present the essential Biblical foundation and to relate Christian ethics to Christian theology. The problems suggested by old phrases like interim ethic or moral man and immoral society are dealt with, and we particularly note the discriminating discussion of the relation of love and justice. This book is popular in no derogatory sense, but only in that its thought, order and expression are balanced and lucid.

Quakerism and Early Christianity, by Emeritus Professor Henry J. Cadbury of Harvard (Allen and Unwin; 6s. net cloth, 4s. 6d. paper), is the Swarthmore Lecture for 1957. In it the distinguished scholar deals with the historical similarity of the two movements, the parallel topics for inquiry which they present, and the lesson swhich emerge for the present day.

A tragedy befell some of the MS. of the late Professor Harold H. Joachim and his most interesting Lectures on Descartes' preparatory work were lost beyond recall. From very full notes taken by

two who heard the Lectures Professor Errol E. Harris has edited what is the only available text of the Lectures—*Descartes' Rules for the Direction of the Mind* (Allen and Unwin ; 10s. 6d. net).

Joachim was a profound scholar whose understanding of Descartes and Spinoza—to mention only two philosophers—was unsurpassed. All students of philosophy will welcome this publication. Joachim comments with clarity on what Descartes wrote, criticizes where necessary, and adds his own contribution.

An excellent book within its limits of size which will help students, Sunday School teachers and young church members has been written by the Rev. A. Gilmore, M.A., B.D., with the title, *Reading the Bible* (Carey-Kingsgate Press ; 8s. 6d. net). Its aim is to give guidance as to reading the Bible with understanding. That is not possible unless one knows the approximate date of a particular writing, the circumstances which called it forth and the general background. The widely-accepted critical views should be explained. There prevails dense ignorance of and about the Bible and this little work will, one hopes, help to dispel that ignorance and lead many back to Bible reading with new zest and interest. If the Bible be read with such understanding of its real aim, it will be found in personal experience to be the Word of God to men.

This attempt—*My Minds and I*, by Mr. E. V. 'Ted' Crane, Ph.B., M.E. (Christopher Publishing House, Boston ; $4.00)—to correlate the individual's spiritual psychology with his physical and mental well-being, had its origin in the nervous breakdown of the author. By chance a neighbour introduced him to the works of Dr. Glenn Clark, well known on both sides of the Atlantic for his devotional books and especially for a volume on 'How to Find Health Through Prayer.' Slowly the new interest brought new life and the gradual disappearance of his psycho-somatic symptoms. He then, as an engineer and scientist, set about a thorough study of the mechanisms of the mind and shows in chapter after chapter how our courage, our discretion, our sense of responsibility, etc., affect our glandular system—the thyroid, the thymus, the pituitary, etc. There is a great deal of autobiography mixed with the scientific study ; but as his aim is to help those who like himself have suffered that is to be expected. Those looking for an opportunity to study the mental and physical processes behind spiritual healing will find this book suggestive.

In the volume *Sermons on Isaiah's Prophecy of the Death and Passion of Christ*, by John Calvin (James Clarke ; 12s. 6d. net), the translator and editor, T. H. L. Parker, says : 'I have allowed myself not inconsiderable freedom in translation.' He fully justifies the freedom he takes for the seven sermons he translates read smoothly, communicating the power of the original preacher so that we can understand why Badius the printer on hearing them held up a volume under preparation in order to include these sermons.

The editing is scholarly and exact. But one could have wished that the pagination of the *Corpus Reformatorum* had been kept to the margin for such meticulous recording which results in 'blas ^{606} pheme' (p. 41) or 'op ^{616} press' (p. 57) tends to dissipate the advantages gained by excellent translation.

The introduction is comprehensive and informative and each sermon is preceded by the section of Calvin's Commentary relating to its text. The seven sermons on Is 52^{13}–53^{12} are worth reading not only as sources for the thought of Calvin but also because they are rich in material which provokes one into thinking further for oneself. Besides bearing the mark of Calvin's Biblical scholarship they are profoundly devotional.

The influence of the Middle Ages is clearly seen in the exegesis, for Calvin, like Luther, retained a Christological interpretation of the Old Testament. Yet there is much in them which is pertinent for to-day. Does not, for example, the second sermon rebuke the current fashion of measuring the success of preaching by the arithmetical response it provokes ?

The latest volume in the 'Teach Yourself History' series is *Whitgift and the English Church*, by the Rev. V. J. K. Brook (English Universities Press ; 8s. 6d. net). Whitgift, more than any one else except Queen Elizabeth herself, was responsible for frustrating the Puritan effort to remould the Church after a Presbyterian fashion, and for carrying it through the critical period with the features of its Elizabethan settlement unaltered. The author shows, however, that after his own fashion Whitgift was a reformer who sought to remedy abuses and raise the standards of the ministry. The book provides an admirable survey of Elizabethan Puritanism.

Miss Nancy Brysson Morrison has produced well-written sketches of prominent figures of the Scottish Church from Patrick Hamilton to John White, and these are now published as *They Need No Candle* (Epworth Press ; 5s. net). The result is a fair impression both of the twelve men in question and of the colourful story of the last four centuries ; but we have noted minor errors on pages 15, 19, 28, 56 and 58.

Almost any man who is thrilled with his job can write a thrilling book about it. The Rev. George Reindorp is thrilled with the job of being a parish priest, and in *No Common Task* (Hodder and Stoughton ; 4s. 6d. net) he has written a fascinating book about his job. His book has five parts. In the first part he tells us what the parish priest does ; in the second part he takes us behind the scenes ; in the third part he outlines his own custom in the preparation for and solemnization of weddings ; in the fourth part he discusses religion on the air ; and in the fifth part he gives us a brief selection of his sermons.

George Reindorp is a man with ideals. The Queen's Regulations and the Admiralty Instructions sum up the duties of the naval chaplain by saying that he must be ' the friend and adviser of all on board.' That also is the duty of the parish priest. He reminds us of the duty of the ministry as laid down by the Book of Common Prayer—' to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord ; to teach, and to premonish, to feed and to provide for the Lord's family ; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad that they may be saved through Christ for ever.' Any man who keeps these great ideals before him is bound to be thrilled by the work of the ministry.

One of the loveliest things in the book is the story of how a nurse taught a man to pray, and turned him into a man of faith. She used her hand and its fingers to help her to pray, because she was always using her hand. The thumb was nearest her, so it stood for all the people nearest and dearest to her. The second finger is used for pointing. The teacher points at a pupil, so the second finger stood for all who taught her in school and in hospital. The third finger is the tallest, so it stands for the V.I.P's. The fourth finger is the weakest, as any pianist knows, so it stood for all the people in weakness and in pain. The little finger is the smallest, and it, said the nurse, stood for herself, the least important—as she felt—of all.

This is not a book that one wants to criticize ; one only wants to thank the author for it.

The Covenant People of God, by Mr. H. F. Wickings (Independent Press ; 9s. 6d. net), begins with a brief statement of the nature of the covenant established through the intermediacy of Moses between Jehovah and His people Israel at Sinai. The titles of the chapters in the book give no guide to their contents but seem to indicate what is dealt with in the first section. Thus the one which is entitled ' The Mosaic Covenant ' starts with that covenant but proceeds to make reference to certain historical episodes from that date to the days of Jehu, to judge them in terms of faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the covenant. The next, ' The Book of the Covenant,' beginning with Jehu, with whose renewal of the covenant the author associates the Book of the Covenant, deals particularly with the testimony of the prophets of the eighth and the seventh centuries and with the apostasy under King Manasseh. In this way the author selects events and crises, persons and parties right down to the time of Jesus Christ, to trace the history of the covenant people in its most significant line. The method of the author is to quote the relevant Scriptural passages and offer exegetical notes. The inevitable result is that the room which is left for the notes in a comparatively small book is very exiguous indeed. In addition, much has to be omitted of pertinent Scriptural evidence ; many passages from the Psalms and the Wisdom literature might have been quoted as throwing much light upon the life of the covenant people but space is not found for them. This shows very sharply the difficulties which the author had to face in writing within such narrow limits on a subject which he treats so broadly. Fault will not be found with what he has chosen or with what exegetically he has written ; but so much has had to be left out or left unsaid. It is to be hoped that the book will so stimulate the interest of the reader that he will pursue the subject and so fill in the gaps and fill out the record.

Sursum Corda, by the Rev. Sydney H. Moore (Independent Press ; 8s. 6d. net), consists, as its sub-title says, of studies of some German Hymn Writers. Herder called hymns ' the great working tool of Christianity.' Sir Henry Coward called them ' a mental vitamin.' The stories of the great hymns and their writers are always worth studying.

In the late sixteenth century the hymn had become a vehicle of doctrine, even if it was a children's grace.

> Keep, Lord, we pray our doctrine pure,
> 'Gainst Pope and Calvinists secure.
> Our daily bread to us, Lord, send,
> And keep us faithful to the end.

The seventeenth century brought the death and devastation of the Thirty Years' War. In the years of that war Rinckart's records showed that as a pastor he buried no fewer than four thousand four hundred and eighty persons. During the famine in Eilenburger ' from every house there arose a cry for bread. Dogs, cats, rats, pieces of horse carrion were the prizes for which hundreds strove.' In fifty years the population of Germany decreased by sixty per cent. But these very troubles produced a new stream of hymns in which men cried to God. This book does not deal in cheaply sentimental and inaccurate stories about

hymns and hymn-writers; it is a work of real investigation. In it we learn of Johann Heermann, Matthäus Apelles von Löwenstern, Martin Rinckart, Josua Stegmann, Christian Knorr von Rosenroth, Friedrich von Logau, Paul Gerhardt, Gerhard Tersteegen.

The origin of that great hymn 'Now thank we all our God' is both interesting and touching. It was written by Martin Rinckart. 'It's earliest printed form is prefaced by the words: "*A little Grace before Meat, in Parts, by which three little Children may ask Grace one after another.*"' 'So,' writes Mr. Moore, 'apparently its actual intention was that Samuel, Salome and Anna Sophia (Rinckart's children) should each repeat a verse, before they were allowed to get to their porridge! Now, what was once a rather stately children's prayer has become an international psalm of thanksgiving.'

This is a most rewarding book, leading into what for many of us is a new world of information.

The late Archbishop of York was so active in the later years of his long life that one is apt to forget that he had fulfilled a strenuous career at Portsea, Southwark and Winchester before he reached York and became an Anglican ambassador to churches and lands abroad. All this, together with some account of his early years, is set forth with sympathy and frankness in *Archbishop Garbett: A Memoir*, by the Prioress of Whitby (Mowbray; 10s. 6d. net). Many will be glad to see the picture of the man himself which emerges from these pages—an Anglican churchman with no party label, who never spared himself and expected discipline from others, who could be bold in striving for social justice because inspired by a deep Christian pastoral concern.

Mr. Harold St. John of Clarendon School, Abergele, has made an elaborate *Analysis of the Gospel of Mark* (Pickering and Inglis; 15s. net). The analysis is his own and he claims no finality for it. He divides the textual contents into three parts. (1) Chs. 1–9, the Ministry in the North; (2) Ch. 10, in the East, *i.e.*, Transjordan; and (3) chs. 11–16, in the South, *i.e.*, in or near Jerusalem. Then each part is analysed into divisions, each of which yields sub-divisions, each of which is divided into small paragraphs—some of them very small. Each paragraph is commented on with explanations of special terms, local customs, and so on. Mr. St. John is a close follower in exposition of H. B. Swete and J. N. Darby. The literary style is very good and flashes of humour as well as insight are not lacking. We cannot agree with his Darbyite views of Church, Ministry and Sacraments; we are with him when he exposes the futility of trying to find a date for the end of the world, and when he says of faith healing 'on the whole I have more confidence in "His servants the physicians," and a judicious mingling of prayer, faith and medicine.'

Two very interesting additions to the S.C.M. series of 'Studies in Biblical Archaeology' have appeared. *The Temple of Jerusalem* (9s. 6d. net) and *Golgotha and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre* (10s. 6d. net) are both by Professor André Parrot and need no other commendation. Both are well translated, well illustrated by drawings and photographs, and contain excellent short bibliographies. In the former, the author collects all the evidence, Biblical, non-Biblical and archaeological, for describing the successive buildings on the Temple area, and the contents of the buildings. It is as clear and concise as the other volumes in this series and has considerably more Biblical material to interpret and illuminate; all Biblical students will enjoy and profit from this invaluable little book.

The second volume tackles a much more controversial subject—the authenticity of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with its 'affront to architecture and to the most elementary canons of good taste,' and the Garden Tomb or Gordon's Calvary. Of the former he says, 'Since archaeology not only does not deny the accuracy of the tradition, but on the contrary reinforces it at every point, I do not see what further objection there could be'; the latter he regards as deliberately fraudulent, but perhaps many who have worshipped there very early on an Easter Sunday morning have not thought of it as '*the* tomb' but as much more like the sepulchre in the Garden than is the kiosk on the traditional site. There are two misprints: 5 piastres entrance fee is about 1s. not 10s. (p. 64) and 'practically' is misspelt (p. 121).

There is an excellent final chapter on exciting tombs recently discovered in ancient Jerusalem and the early date from which Christians used the symbol of the Cross.

Few of those who sing or listen to the two great Passion compositions of J. S. Bach know what lies behind them in the history of music and of Church ritual. Hence there should be a welcome for *The Background of Passion Music*, by Basil Smallman (S.C.M.; 8s. 6d. net). The author, who is Lecturer in Music in the University of Nottingham, examines these masterpieces in their historical setting and shows how Bach's work is the culmination of a musical and liturgical tradition of great antiquity. Included is a list of Passions by a number of composers that are available in modern editions.

Devotional and Pastoral Classics

A Consideration of William Law's 'Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life'

By the Reverend William Purcell, M.A., Birmingham

A writer who could cause Samuel Johnson to say of one of his books that it was the cause of his first 'thinking in earnest of religion after he became capable of rational enquiry,' may be said at least to arouse curiosity.

The writer was William Law. The book, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, published in 1728, deserves more than the label of devotional classic alone. It is in fact something quite special; something not to be missed: a book which, though as correct and agreeable in style as some of *The Spectator* papers which it at times resembles, achieves its effect neither by eloquence nor emotion so much as by a certain compelling cogency of argument.

Indeed, the book is an argument, valid then as now, for the good sense, as well as for the pious necessity, of a God-centred life. That which Law emphasises over and over again, the nail which he repeatedly strikes home, is just this: that service of God must go the whole way, and involve every aspect of life, private as well as public. Furthermore, he does not exhort so much as work out his thesis calmly step by step. And it is not the least merit of his book that it contains specific direction as to the *how* as well as to the *why* of devotional disciplines.

Law's teaching on methods of prayer, for instance—simple, clear-cut, and sensible, uncluttered by ecclesiasticisms of any kind—is especially valuable. Consider the heading to chapter fourteen, for example, 'Of daily early prayer in the morning. How we are to improve our forms of prayer, and how to increase the spirit of devotion.' Or this, to the twenty-first chapter: 'How all orders of men are to pray and intercede with God for one another. How naturally such intercession amends and reforms the hearts of those that use it.'

Such direction is indeed helpful. Coming upon it, the reader may well be moved to say to himself: 'I can understand this. I can do that.' Law's *Serious Call*, in short, really does call. It is not in the least off-putting, like some devotional literature which tends to daunt by the extreme piety of its tone and the apparent difficulty of its teaching. It is possible to write of the ascent to God in such a manner as to move many a modest amateur climber at the outset to the sad conclusion that that sort of thing is for religious alpinists only. Law never makes this mistake. Instead, he persuades and demonstrates.

Not surprisingly, the result has been to draw from a wide variety of readers impressive testimonies to the excellence of his method. Not only Johnson but also Wesley and Whitfield were, at different times, beholden to him. 'The light flowed so mightily upon my soul that everything appeared a new view,' Wesley recorded of the effect on him of Law's writing.

Whitfield averred that 'God worked powerfully upon my soul.' Even the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forbear to cheer. 'Mr. Law's masterwork,' wrote the author of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* who, as we shall see, had reason to know what he was talking about, 'is still read as a popular and powerful book of devotion. His precepts are rigid; for they are founded upon the Gospel: his satire is sharp, but it is drawn from the knowledge of human life. . . . If he finds a spark of piety in a reader's mind, he will soon kindle it to a flame: and a philosopher must allow that he exposes, with equal severity and truth, the strange contradictions between the faith and practice of the Christian world.'

Who was William Law? When the *Serious Call* appeared he was tutor at Putney in the household of Edward Gibbon, great-grandfather of the historian, and having as his pupil a son of the same name whom Law accompanied to Cambridge where he was himself a member of the University and Fellow of Emmanuel College. It would be more accurate to say, where he had been a Fellow, since he had been deprived of his Fellowship on declining to take the oath of allegiance to George I, a logical consequence of the Jacobite sympathies of which he had been suspected earlier in his career. He thus lived, in a political and ecclesiastical

sense, for the most part of his life in isolation from the main currents of it. His earlier writings were of a controversial nature, just as those of his later years were of a mystical character, when he was much influenced by Jacob Boehme. It was to his middle period that those writings belong which have made so notable a contribution to devotional literature.

He was the son of a grocer at King's Cliffe, near Stamford, and it was to King's Cliffe that he retired after leaving the service of the Gibbon family in 1740. Thereafter, as the founder of a small community, he was able to devote the years of an ordered and sequestered life to the carrying out of those precepts and practices of Christian living of which the principles are so clearly set forth in the *Serious Call*. It can therefore certainly be said of William Law that, like Chaucer's ' Poor Parson,'

> But Christes lore, and his apostles twelve,
> He taughte, and first he folwed it him-selve.

That which Law set himself to achieve, and that which he calls other men similarly to strive after, is holiness of life. By that he means a holiness of the whole life rather than of a part of it. His theme is stated plainly in his first chapter, concerning the nature and extent of Christian devotion. ' Devotion,' he says, ' is neither private nor public prayer, but prayers, whether private or public, are particular parts or instances of devotion. Devotion signifies a life given or devoted to God . . . there is not the least shadow of a reason why we should make God the rule and the measure of our prayers ; why we should then look wholly unto Him, and pray according to His will ; but what equally proves it necessary for us to look wholly unto God, and make Him the rule and measure of all the other actions of our life. . . . It is very observable, that there is not one command in all the Gospel for public worship ; and perhaps it is a duty that is least insisted upon in Scripture of any other. The frequent attendance at it is never so much as mentioned in all the New Testament. Whereas that religion or devotion, which is to govern the ordinary actions of our life, is to be found in almost every verse of Scripture. Our blessed Saviour and His Apostles are wholly taken up in doctrines that relate to common life.' And, therefore, he concludes, ' If we are to follow Christ, it must be in our common way of spending every day. The virtues and holy tempers of Christianity are not ours unless they be the virtues and tempers of our ordinary life.'

His demand is thus for totality of service, and he makes it plain that holiness is not to be attained on any other terms. Anything which substitutes the outward forms of worship for truth in the inward parts is anathema to him. He is stern about this. ' If anyone was to ask himself,' he says, ' how it comes to pass that there are any practices of humility which he wants, any method of charity which he does not follow, any rule of redeeming time which he does not observe, his own heart will tell him that it is because he never intended to be so exact in those duties.' In short, the master reason why the Christian life is often so ineffectively lived is because those who make the attempt frequently fail to devote the whole of their energies and personalities to the task. It is not the grace of God which is lacking so much as the intention to benefit therefrom.

The temptation to quote from Law is difficult to resist. But let two further examples for the moment suffice : ' The best way for anyone to know how much he ought to aspire after holiness is, to consider not how much will make his present life easy, but to ask himself how much he thinks will make him easy at the hour of death . . . though this is an absurdity which we can easily pass over at present, whilst the health of our bodies, the passions of our minds, the noise, and hurry, and pleasures, and business of the world, lead us on with eyes that see not, and ears that hear not ; yet, at death, it will set itself before us in a dreadful magnitude, it will haunt us like a dismal ghost, and our conscience will never let us take our eyes from it.'

And this, of the reasons for self-mortification : ' If the religion of Christians is founded upon the infinite humiliation, the cruel mockings and scourgings, the prodigious sufferings, the poor, persecuted life, and painful death of a crucified Son of God ; what wonder is it, if many humble adorers of this profound mystery, many affectionate lovers of a crucified Lord, should renounce their share of worldy pleasures, and give themselves up to a continual course of mortification and self-denial, that, thus suffering with Christ here, they may reign with Him hereafter?'

Yet the *Serious Call* is above all else a practical book, one which nobly strives and definitely succeeds in bridging the gap so often left between the theory and practice of Christian living. Law's book, indeed, is not so much a call to come out of the world as to be with Christ in it. It is, therefore, perhaps the greatest book of devotion ever written for those who must be out and about, earning their living, catching the bus to work, inescapably infected with what Arnold so well called ' this strange disease of modern life, with its sick hurry, its divided aims, its heads o'er taxed.' The *Serious Call* does not need the quiet of a cloister in order to be heard but its calm voice and wise and wholesome counsel can be carried in the heart into the very market-place itself.

It is this which makes it also so modern a book,

so applicable in its teaching to the needs and demands of our own day. Law did not write for a cloister, he did not write *in* the cloister either, but as the chaplain and spiritual counsellor of a large, intelligent, and worldly family moving in fashionable circles. He thus had ample opportunity of noting in what particulars the various personalities whom he encountered fell short of that Christian ideal in which he saw all good to exist.

From time to time, in the *Serious Call*, he brings such characters before his reader, describes their manner of life, looks with gentle irony upon their usually inadequate religious ideas, and draws the necessary and self-evident moral. And since the various master-types of humanity and, for that matter, the various kinds of human folly, do not alter much from age to age, it is no small part of the enjoyment as well as the value of this book that the reader is enabled to recognize in these characters figures which he himself encounters and upon whom the costume of the twentieth century sits as easily and as probably as that of the eighteenth. Who, for instance, has not met the counterpart of Calidus, the rich business man who has lived all his life in a tearing hurry and who, in his old age, 'if thoughts of religion happen at any time to steal into his head, contents himself with thinking that he never was a friend to heretics and infidels, that he has always been civil to the minister of his parish, and very often given something to the charity schools?'

And who, especially in the pastoral ministry, has not encountered the like of Julius, a great church-goer, but who is, none the less, much given up to idle gossip, foolish friendships, and fondness for particular persons? 'If you ask him,' Law comments, 'why he never puts his conversation, his time, and fortune, under the rules of religion, Julius has no more to say for himself than the most disorderly person.'

And who cannot call to mind the type of worldly-wise man like Mundanus, a person who possesses a clear and strong understanding, but of whom it has to be said that the only thing which has not received 'any benefit from his judicious mind, is his devotion.' This is just in the same poor state it was when he was only six years of age, and the old man prays now in that little form of words which his mother used to hear him repeat night and morning'?

And certainly most of us have come upon the equivalent of Flatus, which name very properly indicates wind and vanity, a type who spends his life being possessed by various novel ideas in each of which in turn, and while they last, he finds salvation to inhere, and who, when Law draws the picture of him, is deeply involved in the vegetarian and physical fitness pursuit of perfection of life.

And, of course, there is always Flavia who, 'would be a miracle of piety if she were but half so careful of her soul as she is of her body. The rising of a pimple in her face, the sting of a gnat, will make her keep her room two or three days, and she thinks they are very rash people that do not take care of things in time. . . . So that it costs her a great deal in sleeping-draughts and waking-draughts, in spirits for the head, in drops for the nerves, in cordials for the stomach, and in saffron for her tea.' Of this hypochondriac, a forerunner of the modern enthusiast for tranquilisers and sleeping pills, Law has this to say: 'I shall not take upon me to say, that it is impossible for Flavia to be saved; but thus much must be said, that she has no grounds from Scripture to think she is in the way of salvation. For her whole life is in direct opposition to all those tempers and practices which the Gospel has made necessary to salvation.'

But it would be to give a very false picture of Law's Christian charity to suggest that all his portraits are critical. On the contrary, he delights to introduce his reader to those in whose lives the love and the grace of God has come to flower. Such an one is Miranda, a young woman who is the opposite of Flavia in all respects, and whose living counterpart it is supposed Law found in the personality of Miss Hester Gibbon, one of the family with whom he lived. He has a notable picture of Miranda reading the Scriptures. 'When she has the New Testament in her hand, she supposes herself at the feet of our Saviour and His Apostles, and makes everything that she learns of them so many laws of her life. She receives their sacred words with as much attention and reverence as if she saw their persons, and knew that they were just come from heaven on purpose to teach her the way that leads to it.' Has anyone ever painted a better miniature of the devout Bible reader?

Here indeed, in Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, is a book full of felicities, full of Christian wisdom, replete with a kind of quiet certitude, mingled with a solid piety which makes it so particularly acceptable as a guide to the things that matter to those who, like ourselves, have to live in wild and whirling times. Of William Law those who care to use his book may well say, 'He, being dead, yet speaketh.'

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Clangers

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., Ph.D., Alsager, Cheshire

'But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one.'—Mt 5^{37} (R.V.).

Now that the examination season is over I may dare to mention the bricks we all drop from time to time. What do you call them—howlers, or 'foxes' paws' (subtle, that: shows the school is good at French!), or what? In my part of the world we call them 'clangers' which isn't a bad name, though it is slang.

I remember marking a Scripture paper in which a candidate said, 'Jesus cured all sorts of diseases, especially Diver's disease.' Clang! There was the junior form where I started off a lesson by asking how far we had reached during the previous week, only to be told by a budding theologian who had a dim recollection of St. Luke's incomparable story about the Boy who Left Home, 'We were talking about the Tropical Son, sir.' Clang again!

We all have our fun at the person who makes a foolish mistake. I can remember to this day the laughter which greeted my reading of the word 'misled' at school as though it were 'mizzled.' Those things are not very serious, and indeed brighten up many a dull school day.

But what worries me is that so many of us are beginning to laugh at clangers of quite another sort. Moral clangers, we might call them. Sometimes they happen at school. You overhear a conversation like this: '. . . and then I told him that we had no exercise books, so we couldn't do the homework he had set. And he swallowed that one! He ought to have known we had books.' The ribald laughter with which that deceit is greeted is not funny at all; it is rather tragic.

Sometimes it happens elsewhere. On a crowded bus recently I saw a very small passenger trying to reach the conductor away at the front to get his 'penny half, please.' Seeing seven-year-old's struggle to pay his fare, a large woman near him said, 'Don't be silly. It's the conductor's job to get your penny, not yours to give it to him. Get off before he comes.' And most of the people in that bus laughed their approval of that dishonest advice. But seven-year-old, I am pleased to say, withered them with a glance which showed that he knew more of the teaching of Jesus than they all; and he paid his fare, though in doing so he was carried on one stop past his destination.

Dishonesty is not something to be laughed at: it is sin to be rebuked. Honesty is not a disease to be dismissed with a pitying shrug of the shoulders: it is an act of courage to be admired by all who live true. In 1534 Parliament required all citizens to declare on oath that Henry VIII was lawful in dismissing his wife, Katharine of Aragon. One of the first to be summoned to take the oath was Sir Thomas More. He stepped from his house in Chelsea into the boat which was to take him to his test, knowing that his refusal to swear so great an untruth would mean his death; but he called out to his son-in-law, 'I thank our Lord, the field is won.' The cruelty of his execution was matched by his undaunted courage.

We all come up against tests of that kind, if not of that severity. Luther once said that no man has matriculated in the school of life until he has been soundly tempted. A lie is a lie, and no amount of fair language will make it into truth. To call it other than a lie is to sin against the Holy Spirit—and if you look up Mk 3^{29} you will find what our Lord said about that.

Poor Pelican

By the Reverend John R. Gray, V.R.D., B.D., Th.M., Glasgow

'Hold fast that which is good.'—1 Th 5^{21}.

Do you know what a pelican is, boys and girls? It is a bird with a very large beak. Like many other creatures with big mouths, it is rather a silly sort of bird. David Livingstone in his diary tells of something the pelican does which shows how silly it is.

The pelican, it seems, likes to eat fish and it is rather good at catching them, perhaps because the fish are even more stupid than it is itself. Now, in Africa there is another bird called the fish-hawk. As its name shows, it also is fond of fish but it is much too lazy to catch them for itself. What the fish-hawk does is this. It watches till a pelican has a nice, big fish in its bill and then it comes swooping down from the sky, making the most fiendish and horrible cries. Every time the pelican hears the fish-hawk it does the same thing. It opens its big mouth in wonder and looks up to see where all the noise is coming from. The fish-hawk then neatly snatches the fish out of the pelican's mouth and goes off somewhere for a nice meal. And this has been going on for thousands of years. The pelican catches the fish. The fish-hawk screams. The pelican opens its bill and looks up and—off with the fish darts the

fish-hawk. One would expect the pelican to learn its lesson in time, learn to pay no attention to the squawking of its enemy, or at least learn not to open its mouth. Apparently each time the poor, silly old pelican forgets.

Now, some people would say that the lesson from this story is simply this 'Keep your mouth closed.' Mostly, that is good advice. But there is a better lesson and it is this. If you have something which is good and useful, hold on to it and don't let it go, even if noisy people are screaming at you to do so. If you have a rule not to swear or lie or cheat or miss church or forget your prayers or your reading of the Bible, then stick to your rule, no matter what anybody may say. Hold on to your good resolution even although people make fun of you or try to hurt you for it. It was something like this that Paul meant when he said to the Christians at Thessalonica—'Hold fast that which is good.'

The Christian Year

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Who's the Hypocrite

BY THE REVEREND HAROLD G. NEWSHAM, M.A., HARTFORD, CONN., U.S.A.

'Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.'—Lk 18^{10}.

'Two men,' said Jesus, 'went up to the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a publican'—that is to say, a person who had bought the right from the Romans to collect taxes from his own people the Jews, and who made his living by the rake-off between what he could collect and what he had to hand over—hence a despised member of the community.

The picture which Jesus went on to draw, however, is a subtle one. It has been aptly called a picture of the 'upturned nose and the bowed-down head.' You can study the picture; you can appreciate the clear-cut distinction between the self-righteous Pharisee and the penitent publican and then—well, then, you can thank God you are not as the Pharisee. And so be in danger of his very fault. Unless our study of the picture leaves us also with the bowed-down head, leaves us saying within ourselves 'I am a sinful man, O Lord,' we had far better keep away from it.

1. *What, according to our Lord's judgment, was the fundamental fault of the Pharisee?* Was he a 'hypocrite' in the ordinary sense in which the word is used—a man professing one thing while practising another? No, there is no suggestion in the picture that this was the Pharisee's deficiency.

What, then, was his fault—a defect so serious in the sight of Jesus that He warned us against it over and over again? It was his self-satisfaction; yes, even though there was so much with which he had legitimate grounds for satisfaction. Hunger and thirst are no longer in his experience. He is convinced that if only others were as himself, the world's problems would be at an end—which is precisely one of the reasons why they are not. And from this point of view, what a potential, if not an actual, Pharisee there is within us all!

The usual way of it in the Christian Church to-day as in the synagogue or temple long ago is this. Gradually over the years, unconsciously and uncritically, we compile our personal standards, which we pride ourselves upon keeping. And so long as we *do* keep them, we are on good terms with ourselves. Worse than this—we feel ourselves distinctly superior to those who are not as we are.

The deadly spiritual peril is that the Pharisee in us, if even for a moment he catches a glimpse of heights beyond the high rung of the ladder to which he has attained, immediately tends to look down on the myriad publicans who are so manifestly on a lower rung than himself. They do this, I am reliably told, in prison. The gentleman whose professional pride is safe-breaking thanks God he is not as these despicable and immoral bigamists; still less these con men, or the pickpocket trash. Pharisaism 'is the attempt to square the inward debtor called conscience by a small composition fee within our ability to pay.' Because we are so devotedly doing thus and thus, we become blinded to the fact that there is still so much unattempted; so much not even yet conceived. Which means, no matter how high the rung of the ladder on which we stand may be, we are incapable of further advance. Those, on much lower rungs, may therefore be more spiritually alive; the publican may have infinitely more spiritual potentiality than the Pharisee.

Jesus said this so outspokenly that He was hated for it, as all disturbers of our peace and all prickers of our complacency and pride are hated. At every stage of our growth, in personal conduct or in social justice alike, Jesus seeks to make us keenly aware of the distances yet to be won. Always He is on ahead. Always He makes as though He would go farther. Were Jesus a leader only and not a Saviour, not one who forgives to the uttermost, we might well despair. But as Charles Wesley has imperishably phrased it, He is the lover of our souls whose grace can cover all our sin.

2. In the picture the Pharisee and the publican are both in the Temple. And they are both in it still to-day. But if now we allow *the scene to change to our twentieth-century world* we have to say that many a Pharisee to-day is not in the

Church at all. And many a publican is either outside the Church through a mistaken honesty which may end up, if it persists, in his also becoming a Pharisee; or he is a man inside the Church troubled with many creditable scruples of conscience and mistakenly wondering if he really ought not to be outside it, which is one of the strongest reasons for being in.

The Pharisee in the story looks at the publican saying his prayers in church and thanks God such hypocrisy isn't his. 'No, *Sir*! *I* live up to *my* professions during the week. But what sort of scrutiny would this publican's life bear? It is nauseating hypocrisy!' But haven't we heard something resembling that from the self-righteous critic *outside* the Church? He says, 'Such numbers of these church-goers mouth pieties on Sunday which they spend the rest of the week contradicting. As for me, I make no claim to be any better than I am.'

Now a reply to that dare only be made in profound humility and with a confession that the inconsistency of our practice with our profession is indeed, far beyond our conscious awareness, very grievous.

Yet a reply *must* be made. For if the criticism were valid it would cut at the root of all our worship. It would strangle the hope of a transformed and redeemed community.

That great chaplain in the First World War, Studdert Kennedy, once made the necessary reply. Mr. Kennedy told of a man he knew who was an extremely good-hearted and generous fellow, but with one serious weakness—his addiction to alcohol. He came to church and to Holy Communion; and once, for the unprecedented period of six months, he succeeded in being a total abstainer. Then, one Good Friday, he was tempted and fell. On the Saturday night, ashamed and penitent, he asked Mr. Kennedy if it would be possible for him to receive Communion on Easter Sunday morning. Mr. Kennedy asked him searchingly if he honestly wanted, with God's help, to conquer his weakness, and with moving sincerity he answered that he would give his right hand to be rid of it. 'Right,' said Studdert Kennedy, 'Then Christ will be waiting for you in the morning, as he was for Peter after the denial.'

A few days later, a man stopped Studdert Kennedy in the street. 'I suppose you wouldn't know, or would you, that Hugh Thomson was out for the count on Friday and then comes like the sanctimonious no-good that he is to your church on Sunday? He's a hypocrite, that's what *he* is. And that's the sort you encourage. When I want a burst, I have one; and I don't care who knows it.'

Well, Kennedy told him that any scoundrel can profess to be a blackguard, and be one. In the sight of God, Kennedy said, there are only two kinds of people: *those who are longing and striving to be better than they are—and those who are not.* Many who seem to be hypocrites are trying to do the hardest thing in the world—they are hungering and thirsting after an ideal and are refusing by God's grace to give up the quest.

Those of us who have an urgent place for the Temple and its worship in our lives have it, not because of any claims of goodness, nor for any imagined superiority of virtue over others. On the contrary, we have it because it keeps us in the remembrance of Christ and the perfections of God. It humbles us with the gulf we see between what we are and what we know in the Presence of the Beauty of Holiness we are meant to be. It keeps us aware of the gulf between the world we have so far contrived and the Kingdom of God we are meant to inhabit. Yet across the gulf, thank God, we behold in the Temple when we truly worship and adore, a bridge whose timbers seem strangely like the wood of Calvary's Cross.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Twenty-Third Psalm

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. RIACH, B.D., EDINBURGH

When a handful of British pilots in 1940 shot the German Air Force out of the sky, and so saved our island home, Walter Lippmann was moved to admiration and wrote: 'What price can be put on the Battle of Britain? What debt collector can tell you the value of that?'

There are some things in this world which have no financial value. They are priceless, and one of these is the twenty-third psalm. Throughout the ages it has done the most extraordinary things for men, and little wonder it has become for the psalm-singing Scottish people the psalm of psalms. Look at it with reverence and we discover it consists of three pastoral scenes.

1. *Scene one.* It is morning. A fierce sun shines from a cloudless sky on the pasture-burnt plain. In the distance a shepherd can be seen striding before his flock, Eastern fashion. The dogs, with tongues rolling, lag far behind. The ewes amble along slowly uttering never a bleat. The lambs have forgotten their frolics and walk amidst the flock in silence. Across the sun-drenched plain the shepherd leads his flock to a secluded valley where runs a quiet stream bordered with green grass. When it is reached what a transformation overtakes the company! The sheep rush for the luscious pasture and nibble away as though they had not a moment to spare. The lambs come to

life and begin to frisk and gambol once again. For a time all is bustle and activity; then one after another, having had their fill, the sheep come to the stream's brink and take their rest.

To Scottish eyes it is indeed a strange sight to see these hardy little creatures in this secluded vale. We should expect to find them nibbling away amongst the boulders on some hill slope. Perhaps the relentless sun had scorched the hill pastures; perhaps some storm had burst over the sheep and battered them cruelly. Whatever the reason, these creatures were in need and the shepherd knew how to meet it. 'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.' As that shepherd knew how to meet the needs of his sheep, so God is the only one who knows how to meet adequately the fundamental needs of us men.

We men, say the psychologists, have three basic needs. We have the need to love and to be loved: we have the need for status in the eyes of our fellow-men and God: we have the need of wholeness—to have all the parts of our being brought into a harmonious whole. Not only nervous and mental breakdown, but child delinquency, morbid guilt, unhappiness, all stem from some basic need of our being remaining unsatisfied. The great tidings the psalmist has to give us is that God, and God alone, can meet all these needs of desperate men. God loves us to distraction and accepts our unworthy love, and so satisfies our need to love and to be loved. God forgives our sins and so meets our need for status. God harmonises our thinking, feeling, acting, and so satisfies our desire for wholeness. No wonder when John Wesley was changing the face of England with his preaching his great cry was, 'He is able! He is able!' For the three fundamental needs of men God, and God alone, meets to perfection.

2. *Scene two.* It is late afternoon. The flock has had its fill and back to the fold it must go for the night. The journey is exceedingly hazardous. The pathway leads up a steep slope covered with rocks and thick undergrowth. Two or three of the sheep bunch too closely together with the result that one of them is knocked over the edge. By good fortune it lands on a ledge of rock covered with moss. Carefully coming to the edge of the path the shepherd leans over, puts his crook round its body and draws the bleating, frightened creature to safety. After this adventure, on they continue with their journey. Suddenly a wild beast springs from the undergrowth and pounces on a lamb. Like a flash the shepherd is on the scene and swinging his heavy club studded with nails he kills the attacker and sets the trembling lamb free. On, once again, they go on their dangerous journey through this valley of deep shadows cast by the thick foliage until the plain is reached above and home sighted in the distance. 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' Unfortunately, there is a mistranslation in our Authorised Version. The verse should read, 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the deep shadow'—meaning that as that shepherd saw his sheep through that dangerous valley so God is with us not simply in the valley of death, but in every other dark valley we have to traverse.

One of the things we men, who are made for fellowship, cannot stand is loneliness in the extreme. Let any trouble come, so long as we have the consciousness that we are not alone, we can go through with it. Watch a farmer yoking a colt for the first time. He stations it alongside an older beast that knows the ways of men. The result is that when the young horse is going through the terrifying experience of being harnessed; when its eyes grow white and it is ready to plunge and to kick, it sees the older beast standing steady as a rock beside it and is calmed. Are we any different? The great tidings this psalmist has to give us is that no man, but God Himself, who created us, who knows us through and through, and to whose power there is no limit, it is He who accompanies us through every valley of shadow we have to travel. If that knowledge cannot see us safely through, what will?

3. *Scene three.* It is evening. The sheep have reached the fold. In they must go, one by one. As each sheep passes the shepherd he draws it to himself and examines it. Here is one with a bruised head. Taking the horn flask filled with olive oil he allows some of the soothing liquid to fall on the injured part. Here is another, not bruised in any way, but utterly exhausted with the exertions of the day, so, reaching for the large two-handed cup, he fills it to the brim and gives the tired creature it to drink. On he goes, right into the dusk, with his individual examining, until the flock is safely folded for the night. 'Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.' As that shepherd cared for every individual sheep, so God cares for every individual in this tortured world.

Science with its miraculous discoveries has proved that from the point of view of size man is completely insignificant in this universe of boundless space—'a minnow in a creek' as Carlyle described him. This fact has had tragic consequences in our time. It is largely responsible for individuals being butchered or thrown into concentration camps to be depersonalized by ruthless

rulers : for multitudes in Europe renouncing faith in God : for many in the Christian Church itself giving up private prayer in which personal needs are presented to God. One thing alone can deliver men from such frightful practices ; and that is the truth which this psalmist has to proclaim. To this writer of genius, size does not count with God, but quality and worth do. What boots it though man's size in comparison with the universe is nothing ? Because there is something of Himself in each of us God not only notices but cares for each of us ; and Frank Crossley was right when he said, ' The good news of the gospel is not that God loves men, but that God loves me, F. W. Crossley ! '

How long ago is it since you read this psalm for yourself ? Take out your Bible. Brood over this scriptural gem, and it will be surprising if you will not find yourself at the end of the exercise repeating to yourself the doxology of the psalmist —' Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life : and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Harvest Thanksgiving

The Virtue of Patience

BY THE REVEREND ROBERT MENZIES, D.D., GLASGOW

' Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.'—Ja 5^{7}.

The time draws near for the ingathering of the harvest, and with the approach of this recurring season every thoughtful mind is provoked to reflection. For of all the natural events of the year this season of harvest is the richest in spiritual suggestiveness. It should not be difficult for any one of us to see the ark among the sheaves. The field of investigation here is so wide, and the material at our disposal so rich that our problem is to make a discriminating selection. To mention only one among the tempting alternatives open to us for treatment let us listen to the voice of the harvest fields as they preach to us a much-needed lesson on the virtue of patience.

In the economy of Nature nothing can be had without patience. It is only after its own appointed time that God's seed comes to God's harvest. And the farmer can do very little to hasten the desired result. ' He must,' writes James in his Epistle, ' wait for the precious fruit of the earth, and have long patience for it, till he receives the early and latter rain.' As Jesus reminds us in His parable of spontaneous growth the seed has its appointed stages, ' first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.' While this developing process is going on the farmer may as well go to sleep so far as any help he can give is concerned. He can and must prepare the soil, of course, carefully select the seed, sow it, harrow it, but that is all he can do. His contribution is important, nay indispensable, but it does not amount to very much. A scientist has reckoned that his net contribution amounts to only five per cent. of the whole. The other ninety-five per cent. is wrought by the cunning of Nature, by the alchemy of sun and rain, the chemistry of the soil, by the inherent vitality of the seed; and for these things the farmer can only patiently wait on Nature. In growing a harvest the superlative virtue is patience.

The importance of this truth should be remembered when we set our hearts on the task of building a better world. No great social gains have ever been won in a hurry. None of the great liberating movements of the world has descended in a trice out of heaven from God. The soil has first carefully to be prepared, the seed of truth planted, the weeds cleared away, time given for the seed to assert its vitality, to sprout, grow, and ripen. Much of the cynicism and disillusionment that comes to earnest men who keep on sowing the good seed of the Kingdom is due to their over-eager desire to get quick results. If they only recognized the necessity for a long patience to overcome the stubborn resistances that retard social progress they would continue at their arduous labours with more cheerful spirits.

Take, for example, the work of the United Nations Organisation. There are few of us who are not profoundly distressed at the sickening delays, set-backs, and frustrations which attend this task. Two global wars have brought the reign of universal peace no nearer. Hegel once said, ' The lesson of history is that mankind learns nothing from history.' Strictly speaking that is not true. Never has there been such a passionate desire for peace in the heart of mankind as now. But the difficulties in the way of securing it are formidable. We have need of patience. We forget that the work of international peace is and must be a slow growth. We are apt to forget how dirty the soil is with the weeds of sin, with the accumulated suspicions and hatreds of centuries, with the clash of conflicting interests, and the newness of the idea of an organized world-order. We forget also that while good men are sowing the seeds of good-will, armament firms and power-politicians are sowing tares in the same broad fields and poisoning the soil. In this epoch-making task of growing a harvest of international peace our watchword should be patience.

'Be patient,' writes James, 'resting your hearts on the ultimate certainty.'

Or look once again at the claim of this virtue on those who set themselves the task of growing a soul. The formation of Christian character is a slow business, look at it how you will. To be sure, the Kingdom of God may come to any man in a moment of time. The good seed of the everlasting Word may, and does, penetrate to the heart without any time-lag. But to die there, and sprout there, and bring forth much fruit there, takes time and a long patience. The seed has to kill the weeds of sin that luxuriate in our rank hearts. It has to push its way through stubborn resistance to its appointed and appropriate expression. It has to be watered with the dew of heaven, warmed with the sunshine of God's love, and vitalized by the energies of Divine grace. And the period between conversion and sanctification takes a whole life-time to reach its desired result. The finer the plant, the more enduring its life, the longer is the period needed for its development. It is possible to erect a rough shack in a week, but it took four hundred years to build Cologne Cathedral. And man is such a cathedral, with the senses for stained-glass windows, with an organ for the praise of the Most High, with the altar of the soul for dedication, with lofty spires for aspiration, with great bells to sound forth the longing of our hearts, a structure that is destined to last for ever. This fine, exacting and delicate achievement of creating a Christ-like character cannot be accomplished in the twinkling of an eye. So do not be disappointed if progress in the spiritual life is slow in ourselves, if only gradually we slough off old bad habits, if only by slow stages we mount on the stepping stones of our dying self-life to higher things. And do not be unduly depressed if spiritual progress is slow in others. In the nurture of our children do not be unduly alarmed if they betray weaknesses and faults which we thought we had eradicated. In our pastoral care of our people do not lose heart if even the saints temporarily lapse from grace. We have need of patience. Cultivate diligently the soil. Sow good seed. Exercise patience and leave results with God. Never forget that 'the earth bringeth forth fruit of itself.'

There is no lesson more urgently needed to-day than that which the harvest fields teach us regarding the need of patience. Men in this modern age are everywhere eager to get results and to get them at the greatest possible speed. We fly through the air on wings, across the earth on swift wheels, through the seven seas in record-breaking ships. We are impatient with slow methods of education which alone can yield substantial results. We insist on cramming the adolescent mind with facts which can be turned to immediate practical utility. We are impatient to make money quickly, and half the sins of the money world, such as profiteering, gambling, punting, and reckless speculation, are directly attributable to our eagerness to secure quick financial results. But nothing worth while, nothing that lasts and permanently enriches human life, is done in a hurry. The earth takes time to yield its fruits. The God we worship, who made heaven and earth, is a long-suffering and infinitely patient God. 'With unperturbed pace, majestic instancy' He works out His sovereign purposes. 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.' God who waits and works and whose long-suffering is our salvation is our Pattern and Example. And 'he that believeth shall not make haste.'

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Spirit and Flesh

BY THE REVEREND T. R. MILFORD, M.A.,
CANON AND CHANCELLOR OF LINCOLN

'The mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace.'—Ro 8^6 (R.V.).

1. The mind of the flesh—that is *phronema sarkos*, 'which,' as our Article IX says, 'some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh.' Moffatt has 'the interests of the flesh meant death.' It is the whole range of interests, impulses and desires which belong to men as the highest of the animals. It is what the psychologist traces back to its roots in instinct, libido, and the rest. It is part of the perishing animal, and, as such, its end is death.

There are various ways in which we may try to deal with it. That taken by the majority is to organize for the satisfaction of desire as efficiently as possible. This produces the characteristic pattern of societies, people in whom prudence is a leading virtue, honesty is practised as the best policy, and desires are kept under control because of the troubles that otherwise ensue. Turn it over to the technocrats, get psychologists to train it, trim it up with art, promise it prosperity for all, and universal peace secured by fear—it is still the same old mind of the flesh, still the same old *phronema sarkos*, and its end is the same old death—sometimes sudden and violent, when the nations' incompatible desires or frantic fears drive them into war; sometimes nasty and slow, when the means of production break down, and something goes wrong with the works; sometimes craftily hidden, in a nursing home, where the word death

is never allowed to be spoken, but death comes all the same.

Intellectual and æsthetic satisfactions as such are still part of *phronema sarkos*. The courtly manners of the eighteenth century were no less worldly for being cultivated; good taste as such in wine or music is no nearer to the life of the Spirit than cocoa and crude choruses, or jazz.

There is more hope in the great philosophical tradition of East and West. Deny yourself altogether, it says, disown desire, and let the flesh wither away. Strangely enough this, too, may be (but is not always) *phronema sarkos* in disguise. It is so when this way is undertaken because we want to escape from trouble, we want Nirvana. And, then, the end of it, too, is death; sometimes a living death, shrivelling down from the full range of human interests into a narrower and narrower circle, down to a point, down to annihilation. Or the mind of the flesh is the pride which cries 'I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul,' striking an attitude on the edge of the abyss.

And then again an individual, or a whole community, may submit itself to a law which it accepts as binding. Not only the Jews, but they pre-eminently, took this way—the way of the law of God. They knew they ought to obey, because God had chosen them, and not they Him. But still it went wrong with them. 'Ye cannot do the things that ye would.' That is how St. Paul sums it up in the Epistle for to-day. The rule keepers are as far off, in success and failure, as the rest. In other words they that are in the flesh cannot please God, and cannot win eternal life, which is the gift of God.

2. 'The mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace.' If it has not the mind of the Spirit, if it is not possessed by the mind of the Spirit, the Church is just like any other society, and we are just like any other lot of people gathered together who have a common interest. In fact the Church would be, without the Spirit, just what people generally think it is—a society for people who are interested in religion, and like spending their Sunday morning or afternoon in this extraordinary exercise.

But we know that is not the whole truth. We bear witness, and the Spirit witnesses with our spirit, that there is something more. We are in church because we have been laid hold of by a love which is not our own. It doesn't come from the ecclesiastical organization, which is not particularly loving and never has been, nor is it the love which we individually have. We are not all that fond of one another, are we?

We know that our own contribution is largely resistance; our small acts of loving are often wrenched from us; our resolutions of purity are extracted against our will. The neighbours that we do not want to care about are planted in our lives until we begin to love them in self-defence. We have to change our ambitions at the bidding of this imperious Will. The more we give the more is demanded, and when we have done all we are taught to say we are unprofitable servants.

What is it, who is it, that comes like this, 'jarring the music of our few short years?' Who is it, what is it, that breaks down so ruthlessly every protection that we erect against one another, against reality, against God? Who is it, what is it, that will not let us call our souls our own—that least of all?

What is it, who is it, that we see looking at us out of the eyes of those who have come near to making the complete surrender? Who is it gives that peace which is so far from indifference, that love which is never fussy? Who is it succeeds in getting the unlovable loved? Who is it works the miracle of Divine forgiveness so that men forgive each other, and know themselves to be forgiven? Who is it that continually gives us a fresh start, and never despairs?

It is the Holy Spirit of God, who is recognizably the Spirit of Christ. Not every enthusiastic spirit is from Him, not even every one that demands self-sacrifice as the price of power. Test the spirits by what you know of Jesus from the Gospels and as reflected in His saints. The Spirit draws you gently (or sometimes violently) away from setting your affection on things on earth. He gives you people to love, causes to serve, work to do, and energy to do it, gifts and talents of various kinds, friends and colleagues and 'all these things.' But look, do you see, they all carry two marks which He has put on them—PERISHABLE and O.H.M.S.

You must not rest in any one, nor may you call a single thing your own. But if you do not treat them as your own, if you take them from Him and use them for Him, they do become filled with Him. Christ became flesh, and in Him the flesh and mind of the flesh are redeemed. For the mind of the Spirit is *life* and *peace*. And the *life* the Spirit gives and for which He is fitting you now, is the life into which Christ entered through death, and into which you, too, can only enter by letting Him reproduce in your spirit His perfect death to self. And the *peace* the Spirit gives is the peace which Jesus gives to those who, loving God, want God's will done.

We have the first-fruits of that life, we have an inkling of that peace. May He who has inserted the small end of the wedge into our resistant souls, may He drive it home with the blows of His mercy, shatter quickly our futile defences, and make us all His own.

Myth and the New Testament[1]

The Greek Word μῦθος

By the Reverend C. K. Barrett, D.D., The University of Durham

In the present article I propose to examine, by means of an outline study of the Greek word μῦθος, the use made of myths, first by Gentiles, then by Jews, in the period in which the New Testament and primitive Christianity were evolving. This study will lead to a brief account of the uses of the word μῦθος in the New Testament. In the second article I shall discuss more generally the questions raised by myth and the New Testament.

The early history of the word μῦθος is simple. It is closely parallel to the word λόγος, and means *word, speech*. This meaning is quite common in Homer and the tragic poets. We find μῦθος contrasted with ἔργον as speech with action; in special contexts it can mean conversation, a public speech, a threat, a piece of advice, or even thought, the unspoken word.

A natural, and very early, development of this primitive meaning is *story*, or *tale*. In the early period nothing whatever is implied about the historical truth of the story, and μῦθος is still used interchangeably with λόγος. Thus in the *Odyssey* (iii. 94) Telemachus asks Nestor to tell him about the fate of his father, Odysseus, whether he has witnessed it himself, or heard the story (μῦθος) from some one else. Telemachus is, of course, wrong in supposing his father to be dead; but this does not affect the issue. What he wants is a plain account of what happened. This use of μῦθος continued in later Greek poetry.

At the same time, however, in Greek prose, the word μῦθος was taking on a new meaning, in which it is contrasted, sometimes explicitly, with λόγος. The development is easy to understand, especially in the light of developing Greek rationalism and scepticism, when it is remembered that most of the μῦθοι—the stories—upon which the Homeric epics and the great tragedies were based were (in the popular sense of the word) myths, stories, that is, of gods and men which only primitive or credulous man believes actually to have happened.

Criticism of the myths is practised with complete freedom by Plato. I need only refer to the well known passage at the end of *Republic*, ii., where Socrates is discussing the education of the young. It is necessary, he says, to tell them stories, and stories are of two kinds, false and true (376 E). It is necessary to use both kinds, the true and the false, but we begin with the false. This causes surprise. But it is true: we begin by telling children μῦθοι, and these on the whole are false, though there are elements of truth in them (ἔνι δὲ καὶ ἀληθῆ; 377 A). From this follows a more detailed criticism, and examples of harmful myths which should be rejected.

Plato has, however, another use of μῦθος. A μῦθος provides the basis for one kind of demonstration, just as λόγος, or rational argument, provides another. When some point is raised, Socrates asks (*Protagoras*, 320 C), 'Shall I prove it to you by telling you a μῦθος, or by going through a λόγος?' 'Please yourself,' says the company. 'Well, I think it would be nicer (χαριέστερον) if I told you a myth.' And a story about the gods follows.

Thus you can argue to a truth, or you can express the same truth—sometimes, it may be, more convincingly—in a myth. The best definition of the word μῦθος in this stage of its development—and for us it is the crucial stage—is that of Suidas: μῦθος is λόγος ψευδής, εἰκονίζων τὴν ἀλήθειαν—a story which is not itself true but represents the truth pictorially.[2] From the time of Plato onwards there was a strong and growing tendency to look upon the ancient traditional stories about the gods and their relations with men in this way. At the same time, as part of that 'failure of nerve' which marked the post-classical, Hellenistic, age, there was a growing preference for μῦθος over λόγος as a means of expressing truth. This preference is characteristic of gnosticism: the saving gnosis is often cast in the form of a myth.

It will thus be seen that, as we approach the New Testament period, we meet with two kinds of myth. There are the traditional Greek stories of the gods, the stock of mythology which is familiar to us chiefly from Homer and the great tragedians; these received interpretations which made them media for the expression of theological or philosophical or moral truth. The more they were interpreted, the less they were believed to be historically

[1] This article and a second which will follow next month contain the substance General Lecture delivered at King's College, Newcastle, on 7th February 1957.

[2] Cf. the motto drawn by H. Jonas, in *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist*, from Sallustius, 4: ταῦτα δὲ ἐγένετο μὲν οὐδέποτε, ἔστι δὲ ἀεί (These things never happened, but eternally *are*.)

'true.' There are also myths which owe their origin to the desire to elucidate or propagate some particular truth. These myths were not freely invented, for they were often based upon ancient religious convictions conceived from the beginning in mythological form, or upon the cycle of Nature with its recurring process of life, death, and resurrection. Indeed, it would perhaps be better to speak not of 'two kinds of myth,' but rather of two different processes into which mythological material was taken up. In the one, the myth is the primary datum, and the reader says, 'Let us find some means—allegorical or other—of getting acceptable truth out of it.' In the other, the primary datum is the truth, which the believer has reached, in all probability, not by ratiocination but by revelation. He now says, 'Where can I find suitable mythological material to commend this truth to my contemporaries?'

Perhaps the best illustration of the work of those who begin with mythology is the careful and systematic analysis of myth made by that Sallustius who wrote *On the Gods and the Universe*, and may have been the friend of Julian. Sallustius is, it is true, a rather late author, but much of what he says can be paralleled in earlier writers; he was a systematizer rather than an innovator. Here is one example of the way in which he deals (4) with a well-known myth.

'At the banquet of the gods Strife (*Ἔρις*) threw a golden apple and the goddesses, vying with one another for its possession, were sent by Zeus to Paris to be judged; Paris thought Aphrodite beautiful, and gave her the apple. Here the banquet signifies the supra-mundane powers of the gods, and that is why they are together, the golden apple signifies the universe, which, as it is made of opposites, is rightly said to be thrown by Strife, and as the various gods give various gifts to the universe they are thought to vie with one another for the possession of the apple; further, the soul that lives in accordance with sense-perception (for that is Paris), seeing beauty alone and not the other powers in the universe, says that the apple is Aphrodite's.'

The analysis and interpretation of myths is a very complicated matter. Here is more from the same chapter of Sallustius. 'Of myths some are theological, some physical; there are also psychical myths and material myths and myths blended from these elements.' This is what Sallustius says, but it is not quite all that he means, for, as he shows by example, one myth may be treated as theological and physical and psychical and material. The example he gives is the tale of the god Cronus, who is said to have swallowed his own children. If we take this as theology, then, since the god is intellectual (*νοερός*), and all intellect is directed towards itself, we learn something about the essential nature of god. The physical interpretation works from the common identification of Cronus with *χρόνος* (time); time as a whole swallows up its parts. The psychical interpretation looks at the human soul, and teaches that the thoughts of our souls, even if they go forth to others, still remain in their creators. The material interpretation involves the equating of gods with material substances, as Cronus with water.

It is hardly open to doubt that in all this theologizing Sallustius has taken the mythological material as it came to him and done his ingenious best to make something out of it. But now we must look at the other side of the picture.

We may take, for example, the story of creation in the Hermetic tractate *Poimandres*.[1] The essence of it lies in its account of the origin and nature of man. Before the emergence of man as we know him the supreme God produced an essential or archetypal man, quite free from the taint of matter. This Man looked out from heaven and saw himself reflected in the watery chaos below. He fell in love with his own image and Nature fell in love with him. He fell out of heaven and found himself in Nature's arms. From the marriage of these two sprang the human race, and it follows from this their mixed origin that they themselves are compounded of Mind and matter. Out of this cosmological myth arises the gnostic message. Men must recognize their mixed nature, and side with Mind against matter. In no other way can they find salvation.

So much for the gospel based upon the myth; where did the myth come from? It is not itself a *creatio ex nihilo*, for it owes much to traditional Oriental accounts of the Creation and of the first man—and among these we must reckon the Genesis story. But it was not taken over ready-made. Whoever may have been responsible for the story as we read it to-day put together the pieces that he used in the light of the truth he wished to convey. He *knew* that men were made of Mind and matter; he knew that their only hope of returning to the heavenly life they had lost lay in turning their backs upon matter and cultivating the world of Mind; and he believed that this truth could best be conveyed in the form of a myth.

In this account of the word *μῦθος* and of the development and use of myth, I have been discussing what myth meant to the pagan mind. I must now narrow the circle and ask what myth meant to the Jews.

We may begin with Philo, as the representative

[1] For the details see my *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents* [1956], 84–87.

of Alexandrian Judaism. There is no simple answer to our question. At least three points must be made.

(1) Philo shows complete impatience with the pagan myths, and can hardly find language severe enough to castigate them. The heathen myths are bound up with idolatry and altogether to be rejected.[1]

(2) But this is not the whole truth about Philo; he does not always act upon the principle just enunciated. He could on occasion use the heathen myths, at least as illustrations. Thus in *Quod Det. Pot.*, 178, he says of Cain that 'nowhere in the book of the Law has his death been mentioned. This shows in a figure that, like the Scylla of fable (*ἡ μεμυθευμένη Σκύλλα*), folly is a deathless evil.' This incidentally is almost a verbal quotation from Homer (*Odyssey*, xii. 118). Again in *de Opificio Mundi*, 133: 'The earth, as we all know, is a mother, for which reason the earliest men thought fit to call her "Demeter," combining the name of "Mother" with that of "earth"; for, as Plato says [*Menexenus*, 238 A], earth does not imitate woman, but woman earth. Poets quite rightly are in the habit of calling earth "All-mother" and "Fruit-bearer" and "Pandora" or "Give-all," inasmuch as she is the originating cause of existence and continuance in existence to all animals and plants alike.'

(3) Philo sharply distinguishes between the myths and the Bible—in *de Opificio Mundi*, 2, he says that Moses 'refrained from inventing myths himself (*μύθους πλασάμενος*) or acquiescing in those composed by others.' Yet in fact he accords to the Bible the same allegorical treatment that his contemporaries gave to the myths. This scarcely needs illustration; Philo's works consist of prolonged allegories, which are justified by the conviction that the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament simply cannot mean what they say.

So much for Philo. It is worth noting briefly that the three observations I have just made about him could also be made, *mutatis mutandis*, about the Rabbis. Like him, they abominated polytheistic mythology; yet like him, though probably to a smaller extent, they knew and could on occasion use the myths.[2] Further, they too sometimes applied to the Old Testament the methods of allegorical exegesis; up to a point this may have been a native product, but it has been argued, with much plausibility, that even the exegetical *middoth* were derived ultimately from principles of Hellenistic rhetoric.

These are all contacts of a superficial kind. More important perhaps is the fact that Jewish apocalyptic seems to be not without contact with non-Jewish mythology. I am here referring not to the popular stories of the Greek pantheon, but to the cosmological speculation, and speculations about the first man, or about a primal, heavenly man, which seem to have been current in the ancient East, and to have affected the Old Testament here and there. This is hardly the place to develop this theme; it will suffice to quote Professor H. H. Rowley (*The Relevance of Apocalyptic* [1944], 38). We need not 'doubt that ancient mythological material was used by the apocalyptic writers. In treating of great cosmic events they would find the figures of cosmic myths appropriate to their purpose.' What we have to do with here is not, of course, the taking over of myths as if they were history, but the use of myth in theology, and in the setting forth of Israel's hope of salvation and the renovation of the world.

We must now turn to the New Testament. The word *μῦθος* itself occurs in several New Testament passages, and these will provide for us an objective starting-point, from which we may be able to move on to deal with the question in a more general way.

One passage stands by itself: 2 P 1[16]: *οὐ γὰρ σεσοφισμένοις μύθοις ἐξακολουθήσαντες*. It is not hard to see the point of this disclaimer. It stands over against the claim that we 'were eye-witnesses of his majesty' (*ἐπόπται γενηθέντες τῆς ἐκείνου μεγαλειότητος*). A specific reference to the Transfiguration follows, and this event was no doubt chiefly in mind; but it is clear that what the author intends to do here is to claim that the stories of the gospel tradition were not artificially created myths but were historically veracious and trustworthy, and depended upon the recollections of eye-witnesses.

All the remaining passages are in the Pastoral Epistles, and are as follows:

1 Ti 1[3f.]: . . . *μὴ ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν' μηδὲ προσέχειν μύθοις καὶ γενεαλογίαις ἀπεράντοις*.

4[7]: *τοὺς δὲ βεβήλους καὶ γραώδεις μύθους παραιτοῦ*.

2 Ti 4[4]: *ἀπὸ μὲν τῆς ἀληθείας τὴν ἀκοὴν ἀποστρέψουσιν, ἐπὶ δὲ τοὺς μύθους ἐκτραπήσονται*.

Tit 1[14]: . . . *μὴ προσέχοντες Ἰουδαϊκοῖς μύθοις καὶ ἐντολαῖς ἀνθρώπων ἀποστρεφομένων τὴν ἀλήθειαν*.

What are these myths, which are to be summarily rejected? Where did they come from?

There is a clear pointer in the words which occur, in the passages I have quoted, along with 'myth.' In two the word 'truth' is mentioned: to turn to myths is to turn away from the truth. Parallel

[1] See *e.g.*, *de Praemiis et Poenis*, 8.

[2] See Strack-Billerbeck, iv. 408 ff.

to giving heed to myths is ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, to teach strange doctrines. In one passage the myths are linked with γενεαλογίαι ἀπέραντοι (' endless genealogies ') ; in another they are Jewish ; in a third they are βέβηλοι and γραώδεις (' profane and old wives' fables '). What do these facts tell us about their origin ? The adjective Jewish seems at first decisive, and the view has been held that Rabbinic myths and speculations about the genealogies found in the Old Testament are meant. Others, however, believe that the material taken as a whole points to gnostic speculations. The myths are cosmic myths of the gnostic kind, and the genealogies are the lists of divine and semi-divine emanations which are characteristic of several second-century gnostic systems. These different lines of interpretation are not incapable of reconciliation. We have the excellent evidence of Colossians for the existence of a movement at the same time Jewish and gnostic, and I see no reason why it should not have developed, after Paul wrote Colossians, in such a way as to produce myths and genealogies which could constitute a serious danger to the Church in Asia.

The danger was so serious that the author of the Pastorals felt himself obliged simply to stand in the old ways and have nothing to do with the application of mythology to Christianity ; but we must not conclude that this was the only attitude that sincere Christians could take. Indeed we have no reason to think that those who made the myths were not sincere Christians, trying, however misguidedly, to work out systematically the truths of the Christian faith. Christianity is, at least from the intellectual point of view, a system of truths about the relation between God, man, and the universe ; in an age, therefore, when men's beliefs about these relations were frequently set forth in mythological form, nothing could be more natural than that advanced Christian thinkers should set out their beliefs in the same way.

The Pastoral Epistles, then, show us a situation in which Christian speculation is beginning to develop, and to develop in a mythological direction. This does not mean that completely new myths are being created, but that Christians are drawing upon the body of mythological material already in existence, no doubt modifying it in the process. *One* reaction to this dangerous process was that of men like the author of these Epistles, who utterly refused to budge ; the only safe course was to stand fast by the old faithful sayings. But was this the only possible line for a Christian to follow ?

Contributions and Comments

George David Henderson, D.D., D.Litt., D.Theol.

By the death, on 28th May in Edinburgh, of the Very Reverend Professor G. D. Henderson this journal lost a valued contributor.

A philosopher turned historian, he was elected to the Chair of Ecclesiastical History in Aberdeen University in 1924, became Master of Christ's College in 1947, and was appointed Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1955. These were the high-lights in a long and useful career filled with academic research, administrative business, wide travelling and much knowledge of men and affairs.

' I have always been a realist, never an idealist,' he said to a friend not long before he died. The judgment was true, and this realism informed all his prolific writing, of which perhaps his two most notable books were his *Religious Life in Seventeenth-Century Scotland* and his *Claims of the Church of Scotland*. Toynbee-esque patterns in history he did not claim to discover ; he was content to record events with scrupulous accuracy and shrewd insight into the motives of men, especially Presbyterian men. And if he was mainly concerned to record the Presbyterian doctrine of worship and government as it had developed down four centuries, in that field he was an acknowledged master.

But ' G.D.,' as his friends affectionately knew him, was no mere bookman or ivory-tower *guru* permanently retired from the hurly-burly of our modern world. *Per contra*, he was eminently a man of affairs, clear-headed in the conduct of business, sagacious in judgment, and impatient of all cant or inefficiency. He used to say, characteristically, that every university should have a Chair of Common Sense, and those who knew him agreed that none could have filled it better than himself. A man of strong prejudices, he deliberately made allowance for them, so that his colleagues readily avowed his complete fair-mindedness. To these qualities of mind and heart he added a keen, dry and pleasantly astringent sense of humour which expressed itself in numerous *obiter dicta* which his students will long cherish.

Two other characteristics he had : a love of travelling ' on the King's business ' and a concern for the Ministry of Women. No Moderator of our times travelled more extensively all over the world, and his year as Moderator found him visiting such

diverse places as Colonel Nasser's house in Cairo and Governor Harding's residence in Cyprus. His life-long desire that women should play a full part in the government of the Church found expression in his last public utterance which was a motion before the General Assembly inviting the Fathers and Brethren to think seriously about admitting women to the Eldership.

He died at the post of duty : a fine scholar, an excellent teacher, a wise administrator, and a man of strong and uncommon personality. By his passing not only the university and city of Aberdeen but the whole Church of Scotland is immeasurably the poorer.

A. M. HUNTER

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Recent Foreign Theology

Das Alte Testament Deutsch. That the series of popular, but scholarly, commentaries on the Old Testament, edited by Herntrich and Weiser under the title *Das Alte Testament Deutsch*,[1] has met a real need is shown by the frequent new editions that are called for. The general plan of the commentaries includes a brief Introduction to each book, a new translation of the Hebrew text, with any departures from the Massoretic text indicated, followed by an exposition abreast of modern scholarship, but presented with no undue technicalities. Already the fourth edition of Weiser's Psalms has appeared,[2] and as this has been revised and now runs to twenty pages more than the third edition, it contains a substantial number of modifications. These mainly take account of books and articles that have seen the light since the earlier edition went to press. Weiser's work is in line with modern study of the Psalter, and it shows the influence of Gunkel and also of the cultic approach that is ever gaining ground. In view of the paucity of good commentaries on the Psalms in English, it would be well if this work could be translated.

Similarly the commentary on the Minor Prophets, by Weiser and Elliger, has gone into a new edition.[3] The first six of these prophets are dealt with by Weiser and are now in their second edition, while the remainder are treated by Elliger in a third edition. In both cases the new edition takes account of recent literature ; Elliger already in the second edition took account of the Habakkuk Pesher found amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls. The two volumes together are extended by more than forty pages. Weiser thinks the oracle at the beginning of Mic 4 is a later edition, as also are some other elements in that chapter and 7^{8-20}. On the other hand, he retains for Micah chapters 5 and 6 and also 7^{1-7}. Elliger rejects the view that the Book of Nahum is a prophetic liturgy. Both volumes are abreast of modern knowledge, and are good examples of the mediation to a wide public of the fruits of recent discovery and research by men of independent judgment, who bring their own contribution to the reader.

The modifications in the second edition of the commentary on Job by Weiser[4] show less substantial enlargement of the work, and the increase is only a page or two. In common with most modern scholars, Weiser holds ch. 28 and the Elihu speeches to be later additions to the Book, and the composition of Job is assigned broadly to the period between the fifth and the third centuries B.C. The chief value of this commentary is not to be found on the higher critical side, however, but in its penetrating interpretation of the thought, and in its association of the material not alone with the Wisdom literature, but with the Israelite cult. This is therefore a significant addition to the works dealing with the Book of Job, and not merely one more commentary to be added to the shelf.

Two new volumes have appeared in their first edition. The first contains the translation and commentary on the Books of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah, and comes from the pen of Galling.[5] Here the view is taken that the work of Ezra followed that of Nehemiah, and that whereas Nehemiah belonged to the reign of Artaxerxes I, Ezra belonged to that of Artaxerxes II. This view has been but rarely found amongst German scholars, though it is widely held elsewhere. Galling has perceived the relevance of one of the Brooklyn Aramaic Papyri to this discussion. He thinks the original work of the Chronicler dates from *c.* 300 B.C., but that about a century later it was revised by a second hand. Again, therefore, this commentary not merely purveys what can be found in other works, but shows the marks of an independent and well-informed mind, and offers its own contribution to the study of these Books.

[1] Published by Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, Göttingen.

[2] *Die Psalmen*, 2 vols. [1955] ; DM. 10·60 each.

[3] *Das Buch der zwölf Kleinen Propheten*, 2 vols. [1956] ; DM. 10·80 and 8·00.

[4] *Das Buch Hiob* [1956] ; DM. 9·80.

[5] *Die Bücher der Chronik, Esra, Nehemia* [1954] ; DM. 10·60.

The other volume is Hertzberg's on the Books of Samuel.[1] Here there is but a brief Introduction of three pages, but the questions usually dealt with in an Introduction are here considered in a series of studies at the end of the various sections into which the Biblical Books are divided. Hertzberg rejects the older view of a two or three source theory for the Book, apart from the Appendix, and instead divides it into seven sections, at the end of each one of which he considers the structure and sources of that section. The long section 2 S 9–20 he regards as homogeneous, as all writers do, and while he does not attempt to decide its authorship, he thinks it comes from the hand of one who had first-hand information of the events with which it deals. While the compiler of the Book extracted this section from a single source, for the other sections he drew on a variety of sources. The sections into which Hertzberg divides the Books, apart from the already mentioned section and the Appendix, are concerned with Eli and Samuel, the Ark, Samuel and Saul, Saul and David, and David's reign, respectively.

All these commentaries are excellently adapted to their purpose, and the reader is given good and clear guidance on each of the problems that surround the Books. But throughout there is an especial interest in the thought and meaning of the Books, and especially on the religious significance for which they have been preserved and treasured.

Louvain Studies. Three further studies in the series of *Analecta Lovaniensia Biblica et Orientalia* have appeared. The first is by B. Willaert, and is devoted to a study of the literary connexion between the first prediction of our Lord's Passion and Peter's confession.[2] The author takes the view that the confession of Peter is found in its more primitive form in Matthew, and that probably Mark omitted part of what he found in his source, whereas Matthew included it. On the other hand, Professor Willaert holds that the prediction of the Passion should not be closely linked with Peter's confession.

The second study is by Canon Coppens, and consists of an *Auseinandersetzung* with Professor Cazelles.[3] Dr. Coppens had reviewed a work of Dr. Cazelles, and in the course of his review had said that some concession to the system of Wellhausen was made in the work. To this Dr. Cazelles replied in an article in *Biblica*, and Dr. Coppens now replies again. While recognizing that there are notable differences between the total view of Wellhausen and that of Cazelles, and while observing that Cazelles has now clarified his view in some respects, the author underlines elements common to the two writers on the side of literary criticism and the sources of the Pentateuch.

The third study is also by the indefatigable Canon Coppens, and it is devoted to the question of the messianic significance of Ps 110.[4] No writer can surpass Father Coppens in bibliographical control, and this erudite study rests on a full acquaintance with all recent literature on this psalm. After a careful textual study of the more difficult verses the author considers the date of the psalm. In common with many writers to-day, he places it well before the Exile, though he does not endorse the present writer's view that it comes from the time of David. He finds a certain messianism in the psalm, but distinguishes this from 'Christology.' He holds that the writer had the contemporary king in mind, but introduced into the picture traits of the future ideal king, so that the two images interpenetrate one another.

The Prophets of Israel. In the German series of Dalp-Taschenbücher—comparable with the Penguins—Dr. Curt Kuhl has published a little book on the Old Testament prophets.[5] It is written for the general reader, and so, while it contains many references to the text of the Bible, it contains few to the writings of modern scholars, who are rarely referred to by name. The author is well acquainted with modern work, however, and his book is a simple, but reliable, summary of present-day views on the prophets. Unlike the late Professor Volz he does not include Moses amongst the prophets, but after some general introductory chapters begins with the prophets of the early monarchy. In his brief treatment of non-Israelite prophets he spares some space to refer to the evidence of prophets at Mari, and there is some reference to the cultic prophets of Israel, who have had a good deal of attention in recent years. But mainly he deals with the canonical prophets, and deals briefly with the life and times and message of each. On the much-discussed Book of Ezekiel, he takes the view that the prophet exercised a ministry first in Jerusalem

[1] *Die Samuelbücher* [1956]; DM. 11.80.

[2] *La Connexion littéraire entre la première prédiction de la Passion et la Confession de Pierre chez les Synoptiques.* (Analecta, Ser. II, Fasc. 49) [1956]. Publications Universitaires de Louvain, and Desclée de Brouwer, Bruges and Paris; Belg. Fr. 30.

[3] *Moïse et les Origines du Pentateuque selon M. Cazelles.* (Analecta, Ser. II, Fasc. 50) [1956]; Belg. Fr. 10.

[4] *La Portée messianique du Psaume CX.* (Analecta, Ser. III, Fasc. 1) [1956]; Belg. Fr. 30.

[5] *Israels Propheten* [1956]. Leo Lehnen Verlag, Munich.

and then in Babylonia, and that he had a double call, the Palestinian call being recorded after the Babylonian, which came some years later. At the end of the book are reproductions of Michael Angelo's paintings of the prophets in the Sixtine Chapel at Rome.

S.O.S. to the Church. Max Lackman, an Evangelical Lutheran Pastor, has written a little book calling for a re-examination of the theological and sacramental foundations of the Lutheran Church and of its relations with the Roman and Orthodox Churches in matters of faith.[1] He propounds ten theses, setting forth what he regards as common errors of faith and doctrine in his own Church, and calls for a revision of Lutheran teaching in the direction of Roman Catholicism and the teaching of the Early Church. The reformation of the Church is held to be before us and not behind us. This is doubtless true, though it is less certain that it will be furthered by this book. No Church should be the prisoner of its heritage, and none should lightly cast its heritage away. Every Church should always be ready to re-examine the foundations of its doctrine and practice, though it is doubtful if any Church is yet seriously ready for this. But if a single World Church ever emerges, every Church will have something to contribute to it, and the Roman Church will have much to learn as well as much to teach.

[1] *Ein Hilferuf aus der Kirche für die Kirche* (Schwabenverlag, Stuttgart; DM. 3.00).

H. H. Rowley

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Entre Nous

Poetry and God

It is one of the odd facts of literary history that in nearly all literatures poetry comes first. Homer perfected poetry long before Herodotus wrote history and Plato dialogue. In a sense poetry is the language of the literary childhood of a race; and at least in Greece poetry was the first vehicle of the education of the child, for it was with the poets that the child began, and he only graduated to prose as part of his higher education. From that fact it would be natural to deduce that there is a simplicity in poetry which cannot be in prose, and indeed it is often so. But there can be great poetry which is very difficult to understand, but also infinitely worth understanding. There is poetry which, as Robert Bridges said of the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, has 'a great dragon folded in the gate to forbid all entrance.'

In *Mastery and Mercy* (Oxford University Press; 15s. net in the U.K. only) Canon Philip M. Martin has given us a study of two great religious poems, 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' by G. M. Hopkins, and 'Ash Wednesday' by T. S. Eliot.

Hopkins was born in 1844; he had a brilliant academic career; he became a Jesuit priest in 1868; he died in 1889; and it was not until 1918 that his poems were prepared for publication by Robert Bridges. There was in Hopkins a deep tension. When he became a Jesuit priest he entered upon an 'elected silence.' He writes: 'What verses I had written, I burned before I became a Jesuit, and resolved to write no more as not belonging to my profession, unless it were by the wish of my superiors.' And yet the man loved beauty with a passion. In May, 1870, he writes in his diary: 'I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it.' In one of his shorter poems he writes:

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed.

One of the most famous of his shorter poems is 'Pied Beauty':

Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise Him.

He writes of Felix Randal, the dead blacksmith :

How far from then forethought of, all thy more boisterous years,
When thou at the random grim forge, powerful amidst peers,
Didst fettle for the great grey drayhorse his bright and battering sandal !

There is something Homeric about poetry like that.

Hopkins' 'elected silence' was broken when his superior advised him to write when the German liner *Deutschland* was wrecked at the mouth of the Thames, and when a quarter of the ship's passengers were drowned, and when in particular five nuns, who were on board her, died calling on Christ. So Hopkins wrote again. His poetry is difficult for three reasons. He writes, not in metre, but with accent, and it is absolutely necessary to read him aloud. He uses 'grammatical short-cuts.' And he is a really great compound-word inventor.

He describes the *Deutschland* entering the storm :

Into the snows she sweeps,
Hurling the haven behind,
The Deutschland, on Sunday ; and so the sky keeps,
For the infinite air is unkind,
And the sea flint-flake, black-backed in the regular blow,
Sitting Eastnortheast, in cursed quarter, the wind ;
Wiry and white-fiery and whirlwind-swivellèd snow
Spins to the widow-making unchilding unfathering deeps.

There is sheer genius in the adjectives of that last line.

In the wreck and in the death of the nuns, calling upon Christ, Hopkins sees certain eternal truths. Even in the wreck men are in the care of God :

O Father, not under thy feathers nor ever as guessing
The goal was a shoal, of a fourth the doom to be drowned ;
Yet did the dark side of the bay of thy blessing
Not vault them, the millions of rounds of thy mercy not reeve even them in ?

As Hopkins sees the tall nun call upon Christ, he sees even death become blessing when Christ is there :

She to the black-about air, to the breaker, the thickly
Falling flakes, to the throng that catches and quails
Was calling 'O Christ, Christ, come quickly' :
The cross to her she calls Christ to her, christens her wild-worst Best.

With Christ the 'wild-worst' becomes the 'Best.'

But Hopkins sees more than this. When sorrow and disaster and pain are met with humility and sacrificial love in Christ, then in some sense Christ is incarnated again :

Not out of his bliss
Springs the stress felt
Nor first from heaven (and few know this)
Swings the stroke dealt—
Stroke and a stress that stars and storms deliver,
That guilt is hushed by, hearts are flushed by and melt—
But it rides time like riding a river
(And here the faithful waver, the faithless fable and miss).

Canon Martin writes : 'Seeing the world *sub specie crucis* reverses the world's judgments ; what the world sees as loss can be gain, what it sees as sheer destruction can be creative, and what destroys bodies can be the salvation of souls. "All hands lost" holds within it the potential of "All souls saved." '

In the case of Hopkins the difficulty of his verse becomes less with every reading, especially with reading aloud. But T. S. Eliot is very different. His technique in 'Ash Wednesday' may be called *allusion*. Again and again he echoes lines and thoughts, and unless one knows not only the line he is echoing, but the whole context of that line, his poems are unintelligible. In six lines of a poem he will echo Dante, Cavalcanti, and Shakespeare. And no one can understand 'Ash Wednesday' at all without an intimate knowledge of Dante, of the Bible, and of the Liturgy of the Catholic Church. For that reason it is impossible even to illustrate his work by quotation in our limits here. But to read 'Ash Wednesday' under the guidance of Canon Martin is a spiritual experience of a very high order.

This is a book for which we are very grateful. Neither Hopkins nor Eliot gives up his treasures easily, but what treasures they are when, under Canon Martin's guidance, we are enabled to appropriate them ! This is a book in the strength of which a man can go for many days.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

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